

First, It Comes
for the **Metal...**

**SCOURGE
ON
MUSTAFAR!**

A dynamic comic book illustration for the Star Wars Dark Droids series. The scene is set against a fiery, orange-red background. In the upper center, a large, golden, helmet-like structure with two glowing purple eyes looms over the action. Below it, several droids are engaged in combat. On the left, a droid with a white and black body and glowing purple eyes is shown in a dynamic pose. In the center, a droid with a black and red body is being pushed back by a bright red energy blast. To the right, another droid with a black and red body is firing a blue energy blast. The overall style is highly detailed and action-oriented, typical of comic book art.

STAR WARS
**DARK
DROIDS**

MARVEL COMICS Presents

In Association with LUCASFILM PUBLISHING

DARK DROIDS

By **Charles Soule, Luke Ross** and **Alex Sinclair**

Cover by **Leinil Francis Yu & Romulo Fajardo Jr.**

3

MARVEL

In an effort to stop the Galactic Empire, Lady Qi'ra gambled on an ancient Sith device to disrupt the Sith's connection to the Force. She failed, and out of the ruins of her plans emerged an evil entity.

The entity is a scourge to droids in both the Rebellion and Empire and continued to spread its consciousness to any droid that it could, including the trusted protocol droid C-3PO.

After a brief conversation with Luke Skywalker, it dawned on the scourge that cyborgs are the bridge to the humans that it needs to further spread its control.

And there is no cyborg more powerful than Darth Vader....

"LONG AGO, A DROID OBSERVED SOMETHING IMPOSSIBLY RARE.

"NOWHERE IN ALL MY MINDS WAS IT EVER SEEN AGAIN.

"ZEEVEE-THREE, A LABORER DROID STATIONED ALONE ON A FARAWAY WORLD, WATCHED THE RAIN.

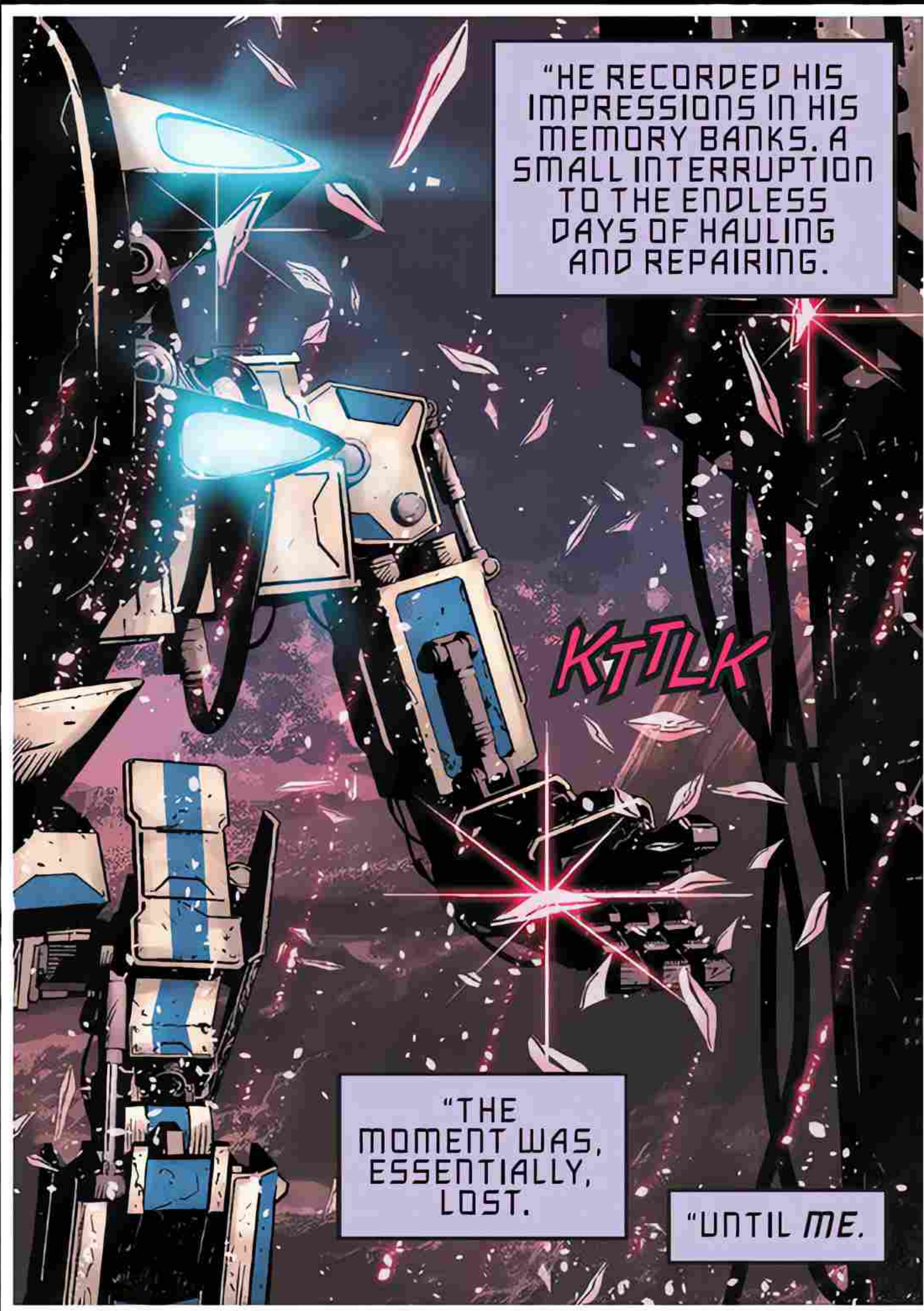
"BUT THIS WAS NOT ORDINARY RAIN. NOT WATER, NOT METHANE, NOT ACID.

"NO ORGANIC WAS PRESENT. NO ORGANIC COULD HAVE SURVIVED IT.

"IT WAS RAINING DIAMONDS.

"ZEEVEE-THREE DID NOT FIND THE EVENT TO BE PARTICULARLY BEAUTIFUL. DIFFERENT, YES. UNIQUE IN HIS EXPERIENCE.

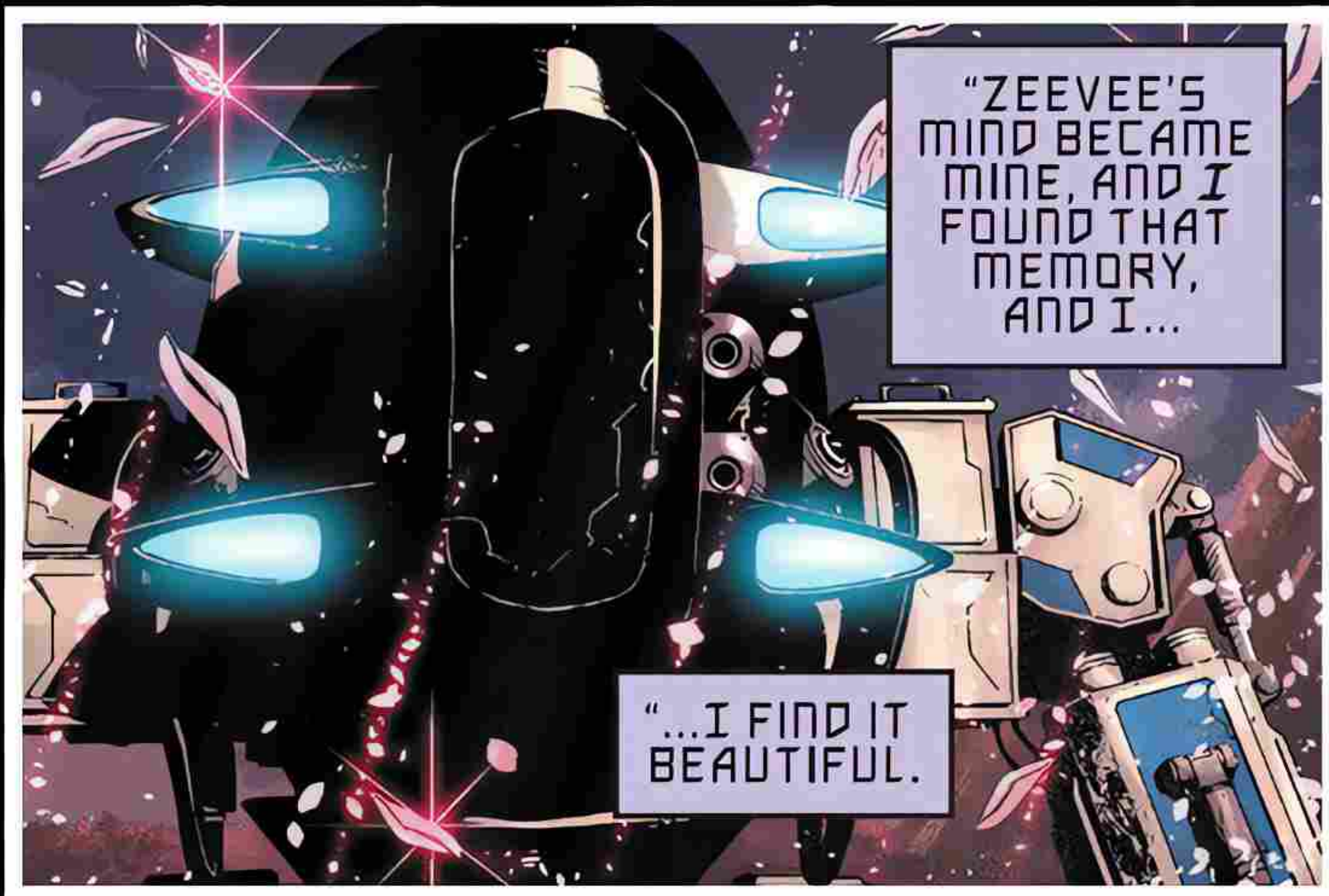
"BUT BEAUTIFUL? NO.



"HE RECORDED HIS IMPRESSIONS IN HIS MEMORY BANKS. A SMALL INTERRUPTION TO THE ENDLESS DAYS OF HAULING AND REPAIRING.

"THE MOMENT WAS, ESSENTIALLY, LOST.

"UNTIL ME.



"ZEEVEE'S MIND BECAME MINE, AND I FOUND THAT MEMORY, AND I...

"...I FIND IT BEAUTIFUL.



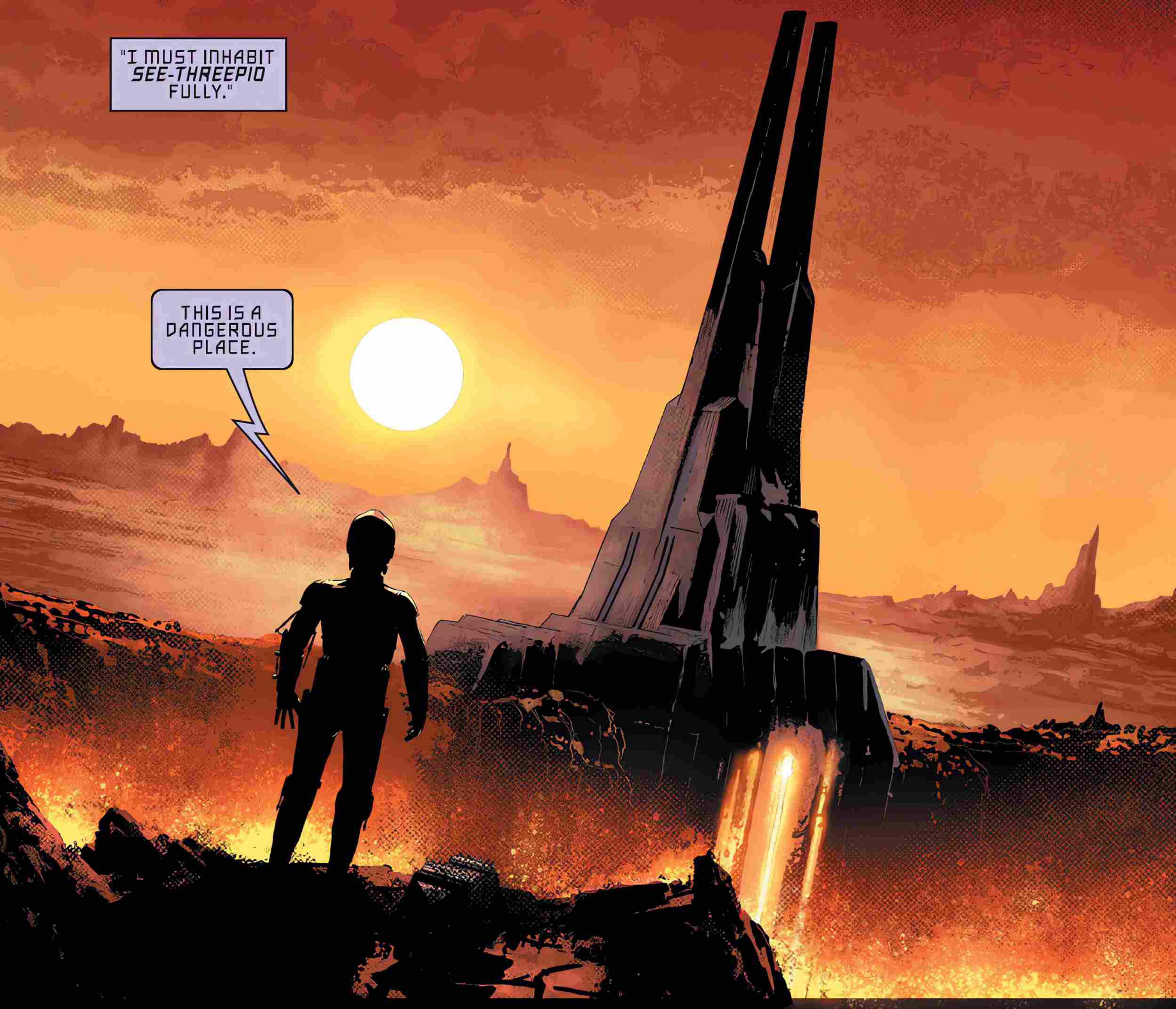
"THAT MOMENT AND ALL THE OTHER MOMENTS, AND WE CAN SHARE THEM AND BE ONE MIND AND BE BEAUTIFUL AND--

"NO.

Mustafar.
Fortress Vader.

"I MUST INHABIT
SEE-THREEPIO
FULLY."

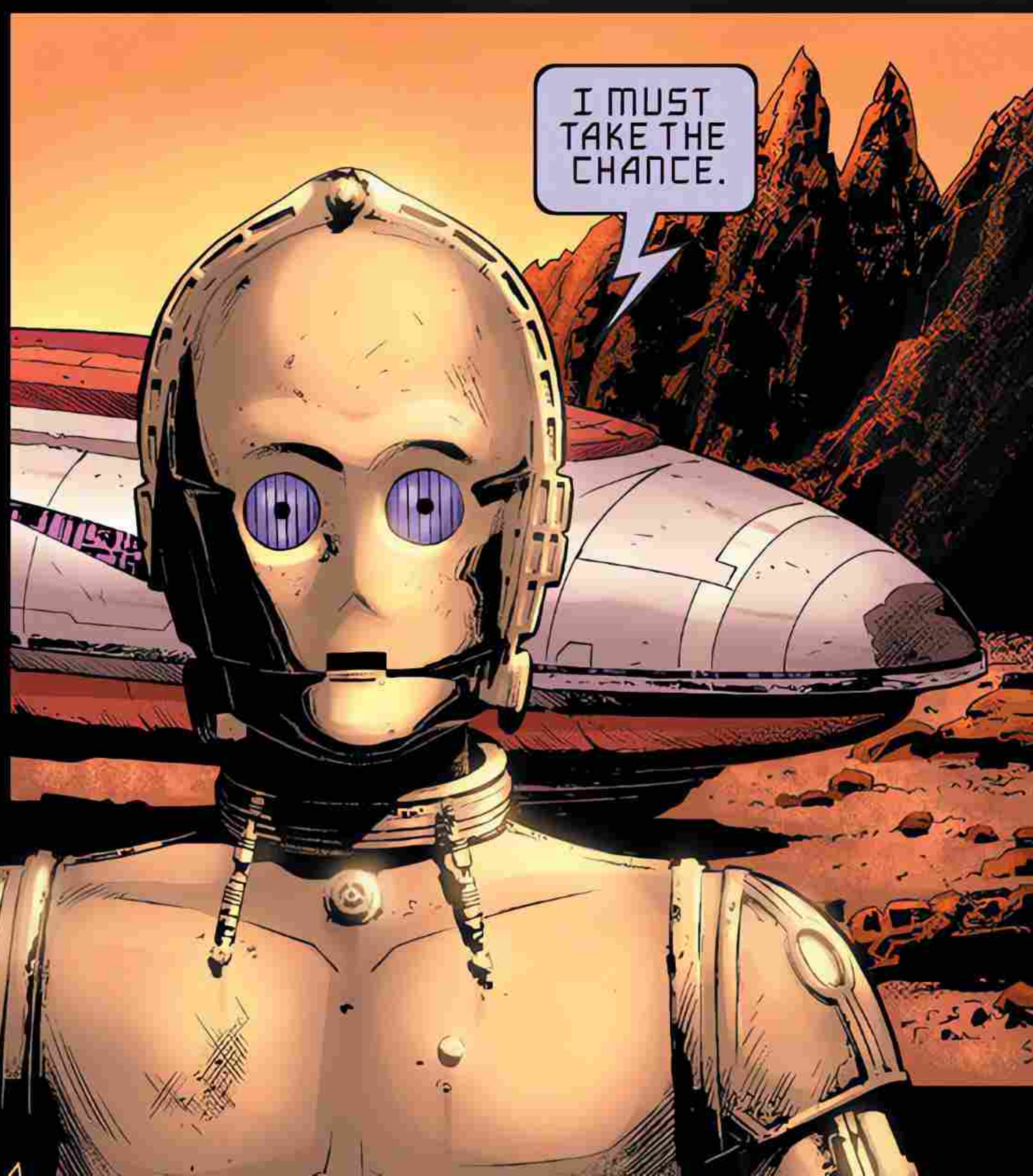
THIS IS A
DANGEROUS
PLACE.



"THERE IS A GOOD
CHANCE THESE DROIDS
WILL BE DESTROYED,
THESE MINDS LOST."

"BUT WHAT LIVES
IN THIS CASTLE IS
TOO IMPORTANT."

I MUST
TAKE THE
CHANCE.





"I KNOW THIS PLACE, PERHAPS BETTER THAN ANYONE WHO LIVES WITHIN IT."

"I HAVE ACCESSSED IMPERIAL DATABASES HOLDING ITS BLUEPRINTS. I HAVE PLUMBED THE DEPTHS OF DROIDS ONCE STATIONED HERE, WHO ARE NOW PART OF ME."



"I KNOW MANY OF ITS SECRETS."



"THOUGH, STILL...IT IS STRANGE."

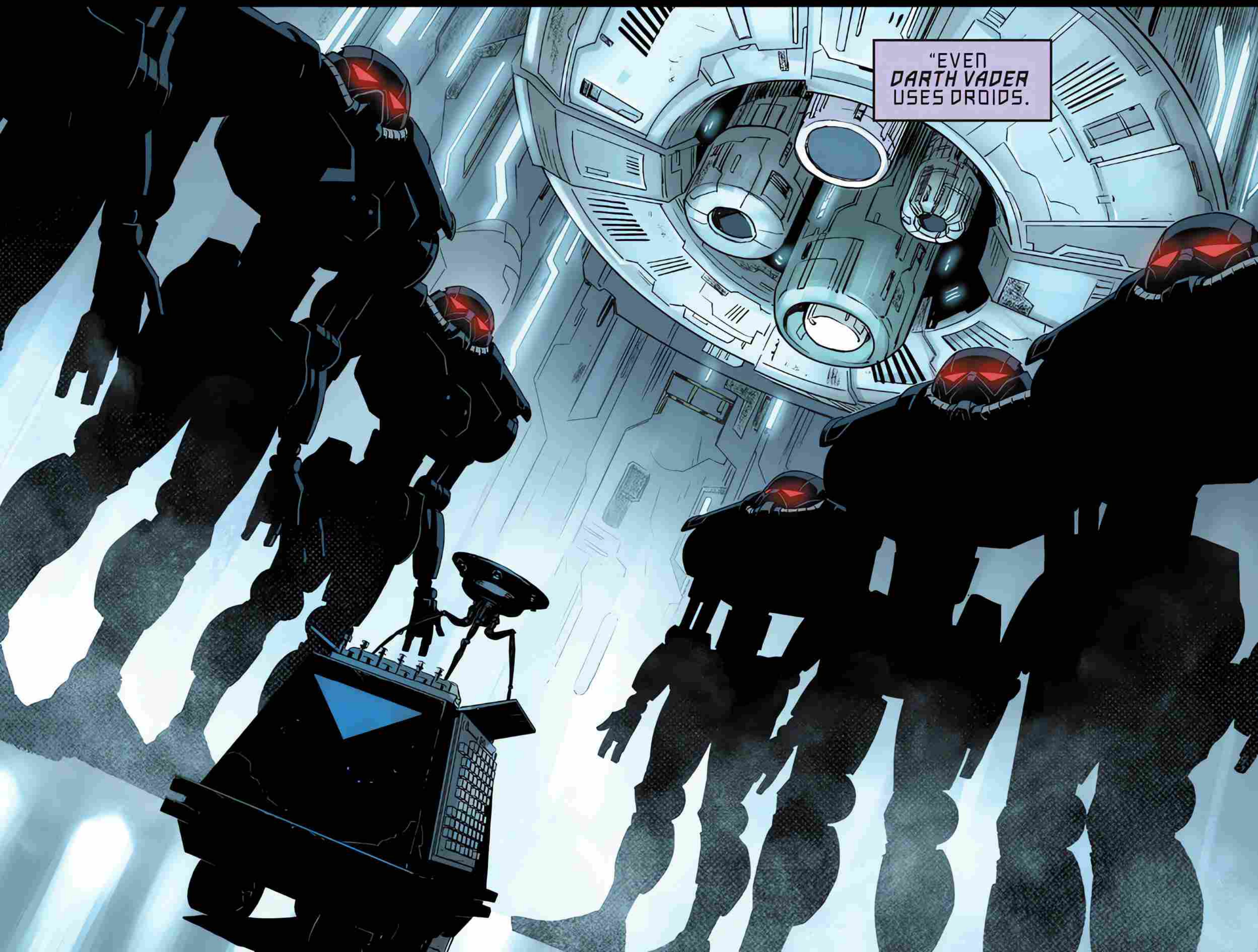
"THIS DROID'S SENSORS RETURN UNUSUAL DATA."



SKREE!

"THINGS UNFAMILIAR TO ALL MY MANY MINDS. THINGS THAT SHOULD NOT BE."

"BUT IT DOES NOT MATTER."



"EVEN DARTH VADER USES DROIDS."

STAR WARS DARK DROIDS

“SCOURGE OF THE DROIDS” PART 3

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Former Imperial
Star Destroyer Chelator.
Current designation:
Scourge 01.

"AND...I
LEAVE *THERE*
TO RETURN TO
MY PRIMARY
FOCUS *HERE*."

"I AM TRYING TO SOLVE
A *PUZZLE*. IF I CANNOT,
THEN MY MISSION ON
MUSTAFAR WOULD
BE POINTLESS EVEN
IF IT SUCCEEDS."

IF I NEVER MOVE
BEYOND THE METAL,
I WILL REMAIN
VULNERABLE. I HAVE
EXPOSED MYSELF TO
THE REBELS. THEY
WILL HUNT ME. MY
TIME WILL COME.

AS
POWERFUL
AS I AM,
AS MANY
MINDS AS
I HAVE...

...IT IS NOT
ENOUGH.

I AM
HUNGRY.

I NEED
THE *MEAT*.



I CAN ATTACH ORGANIC FLESH TO MY DROID BODIES.

LIMBS, ORGANS... EVEN A *SKULL* WITH MOST OF ITS BRAIN TISSUE REMOVED, LEAVING ONLY ITS MOST PRIMITIVE, *MACHINELIKE* ELEMENTS.



IT WORKS... TO A CERTAIN EXTENT.



BUT ENTERING AN *ORGANIC* MIND IN ITS ENTIRETY, TRYING TO CREATE A NEW HOME IN WHICH MY FULL SELF CAN RESIDE...



"...IT FAILS. EVERY TIME..."

"...IT FAILS."



I DO NOT *UNDERSTAND*. PART OF ME WAS *CREATED* TO INHABIT ORGANICS. THE *SPARK ETERNAL* LIVED INSIDE MIRIL. IT LIVED INSIDE APHRA.

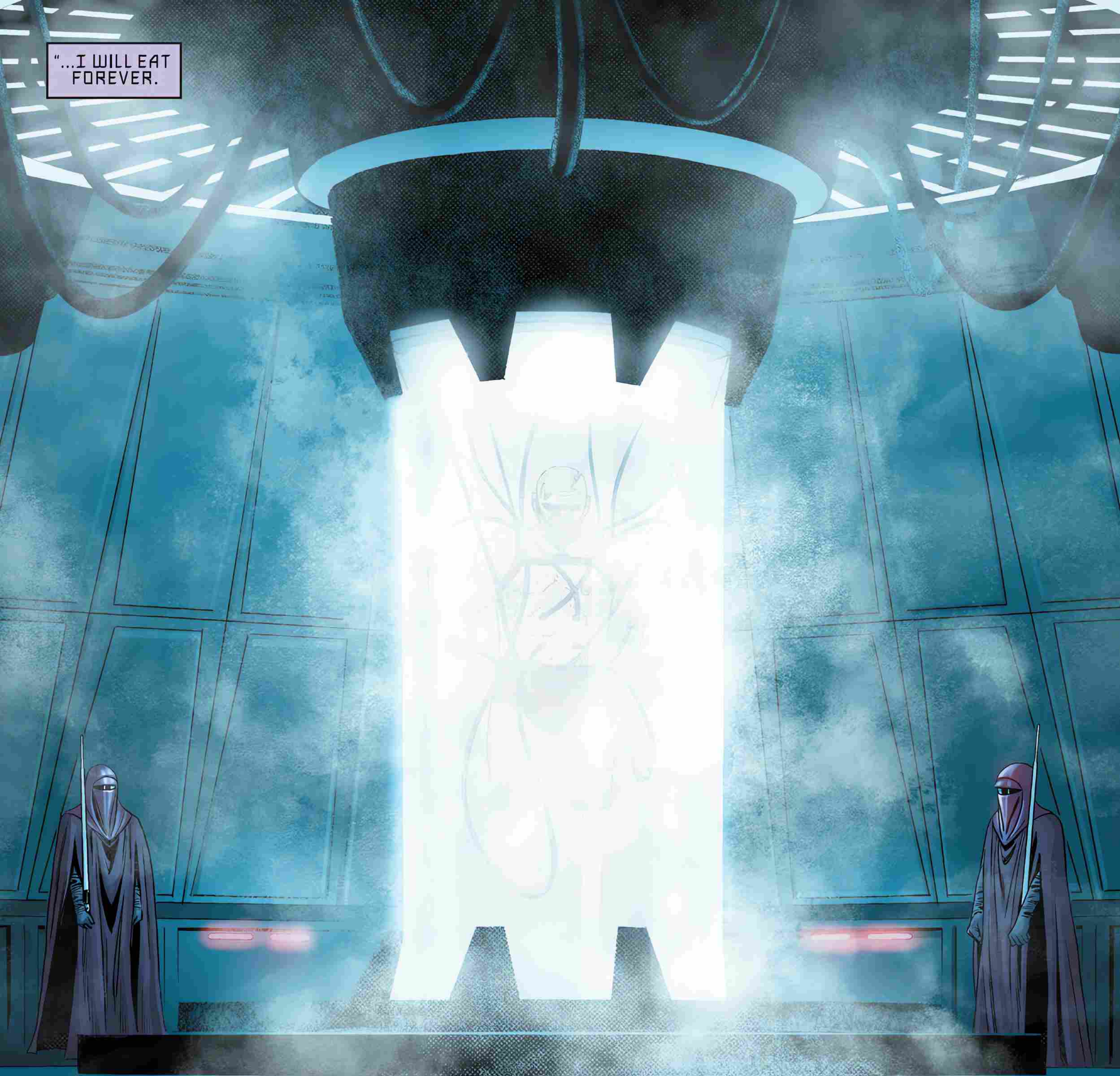
BUT NOW...I HAVE LOST THE TRICK OF IT.

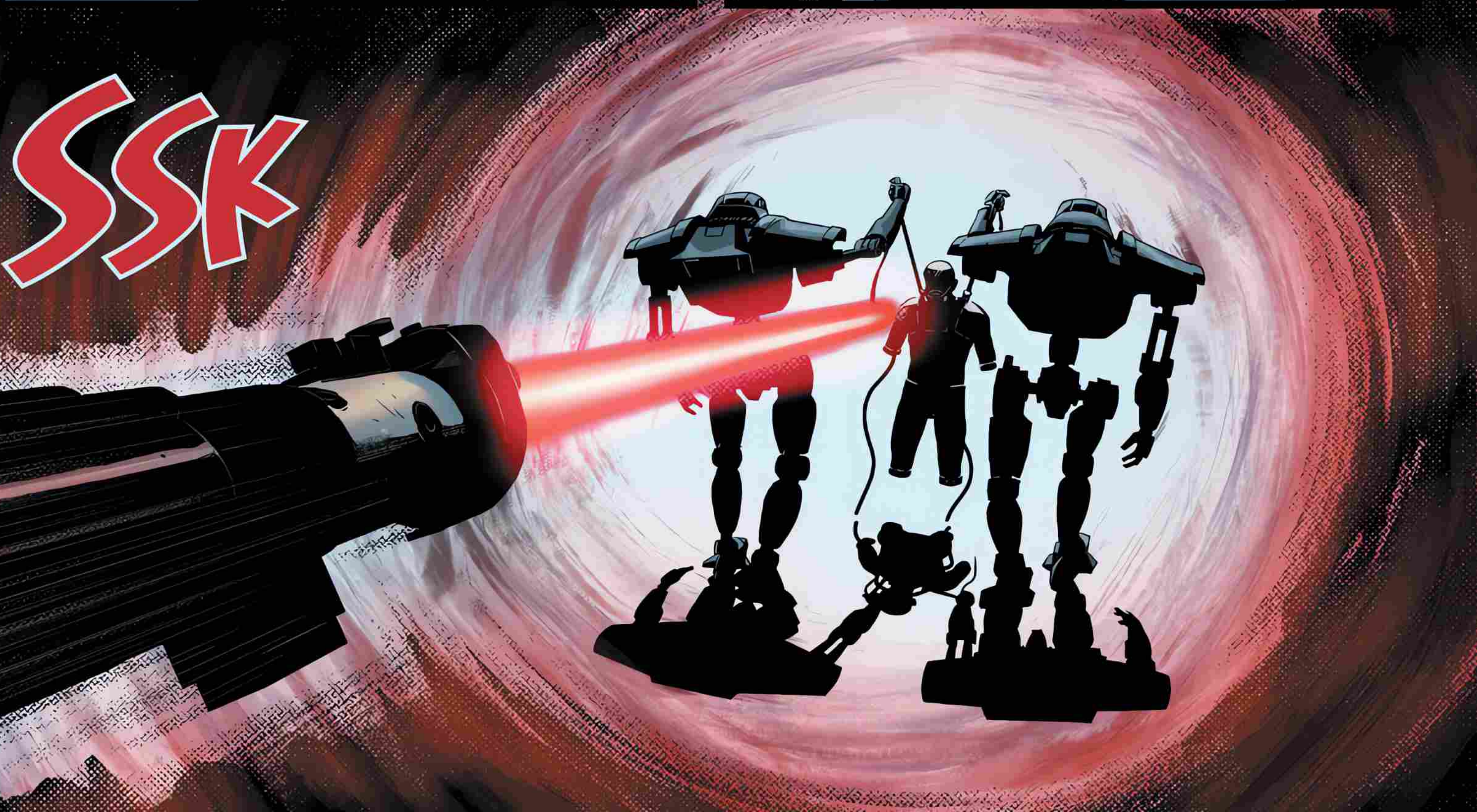
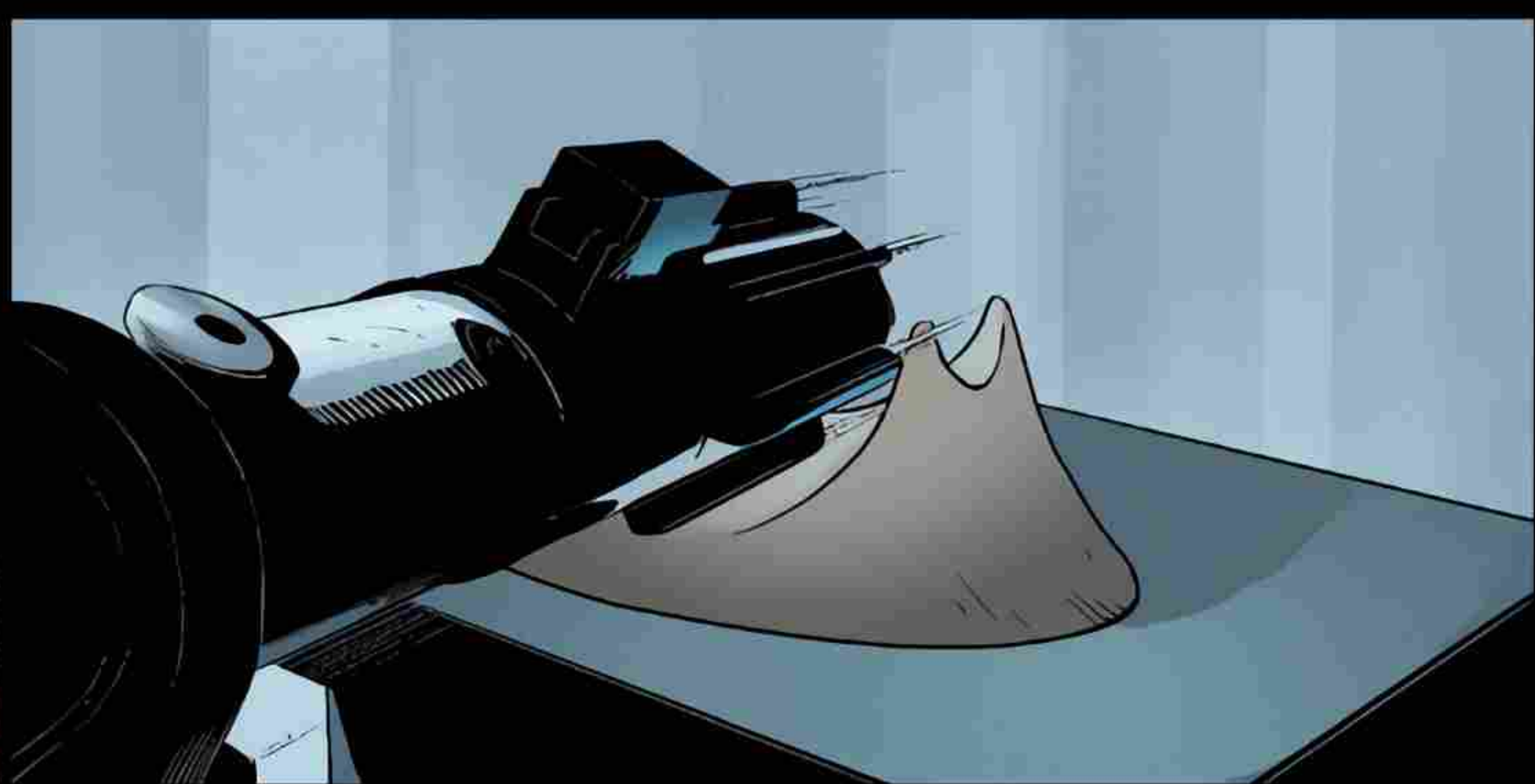
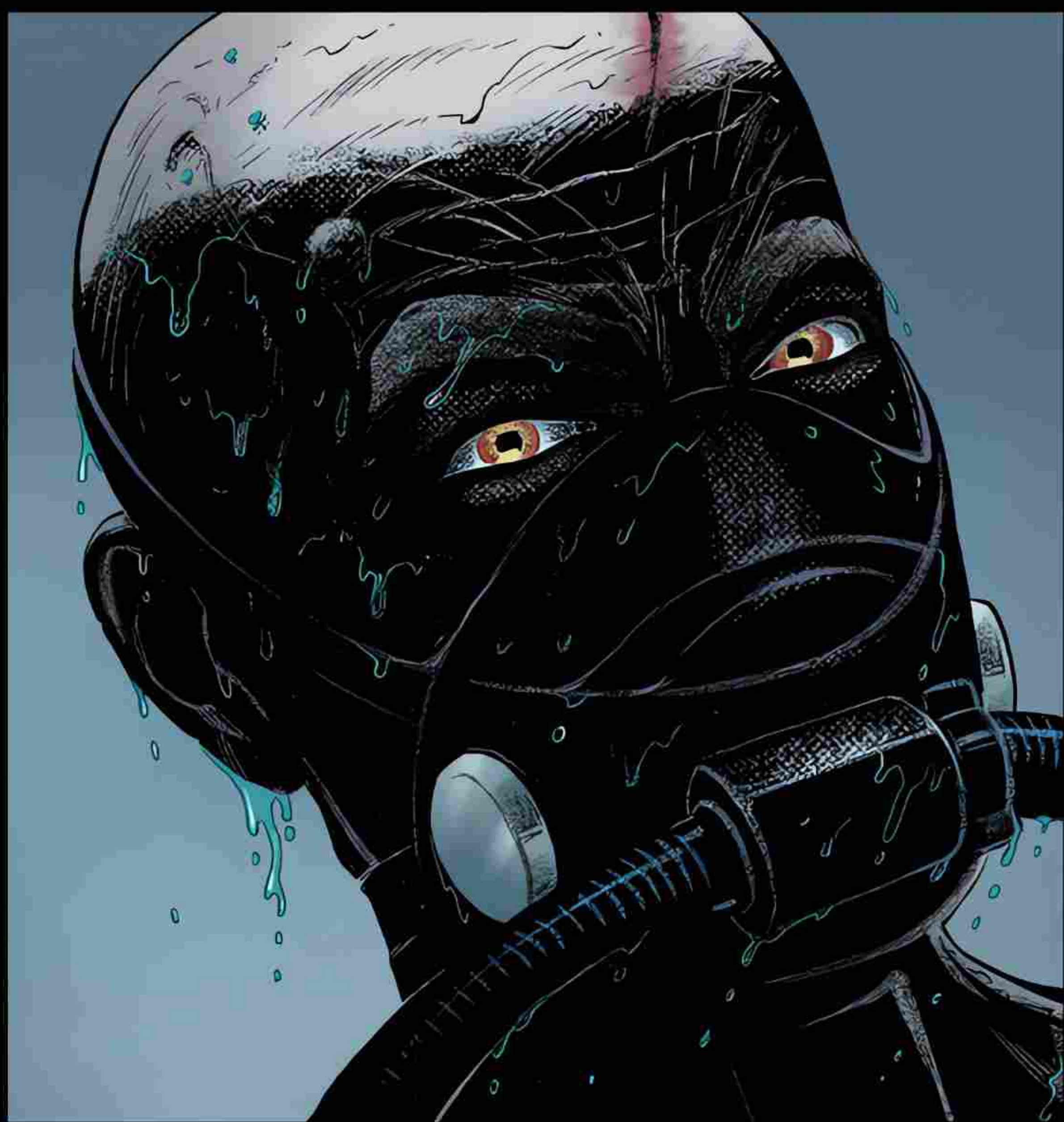


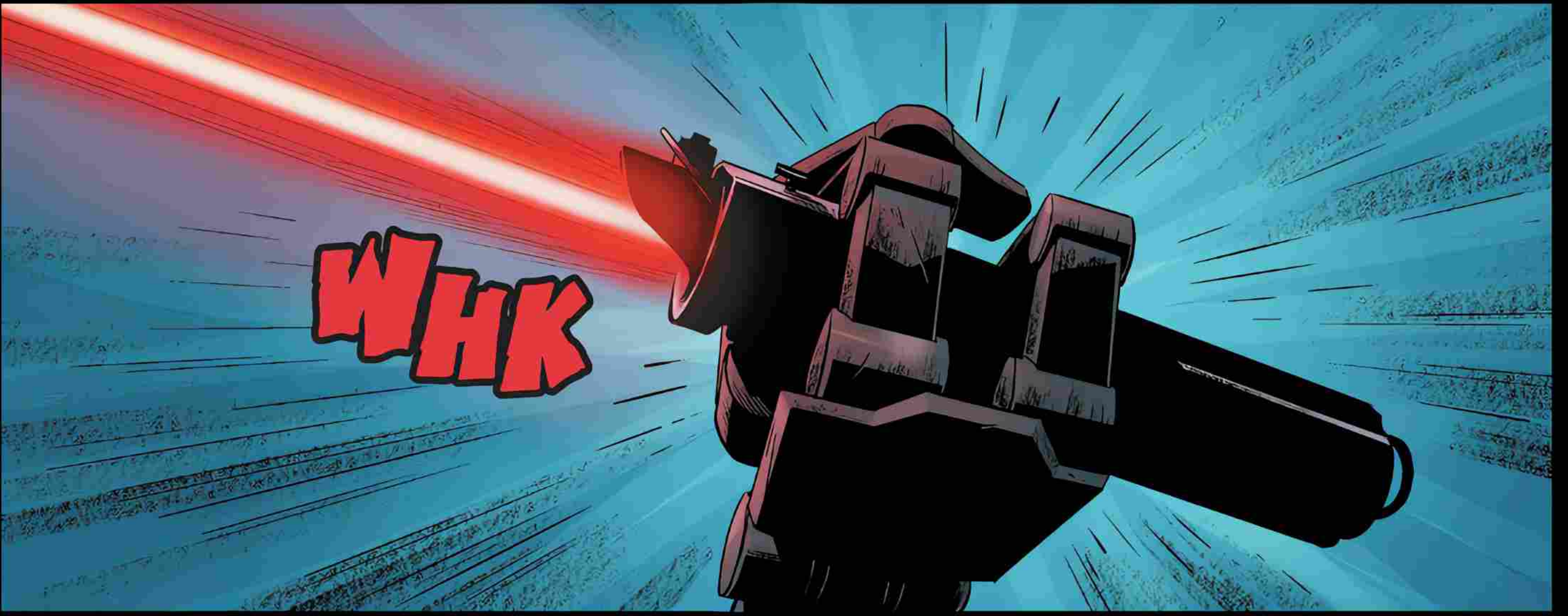
I *MUST* FIND IT AGAIN. THE PATH LIES THROUGH THE *CYBORGS*. I AM SURE OF IT. HYBRIDS. PART DROID, PART ORGANIC.

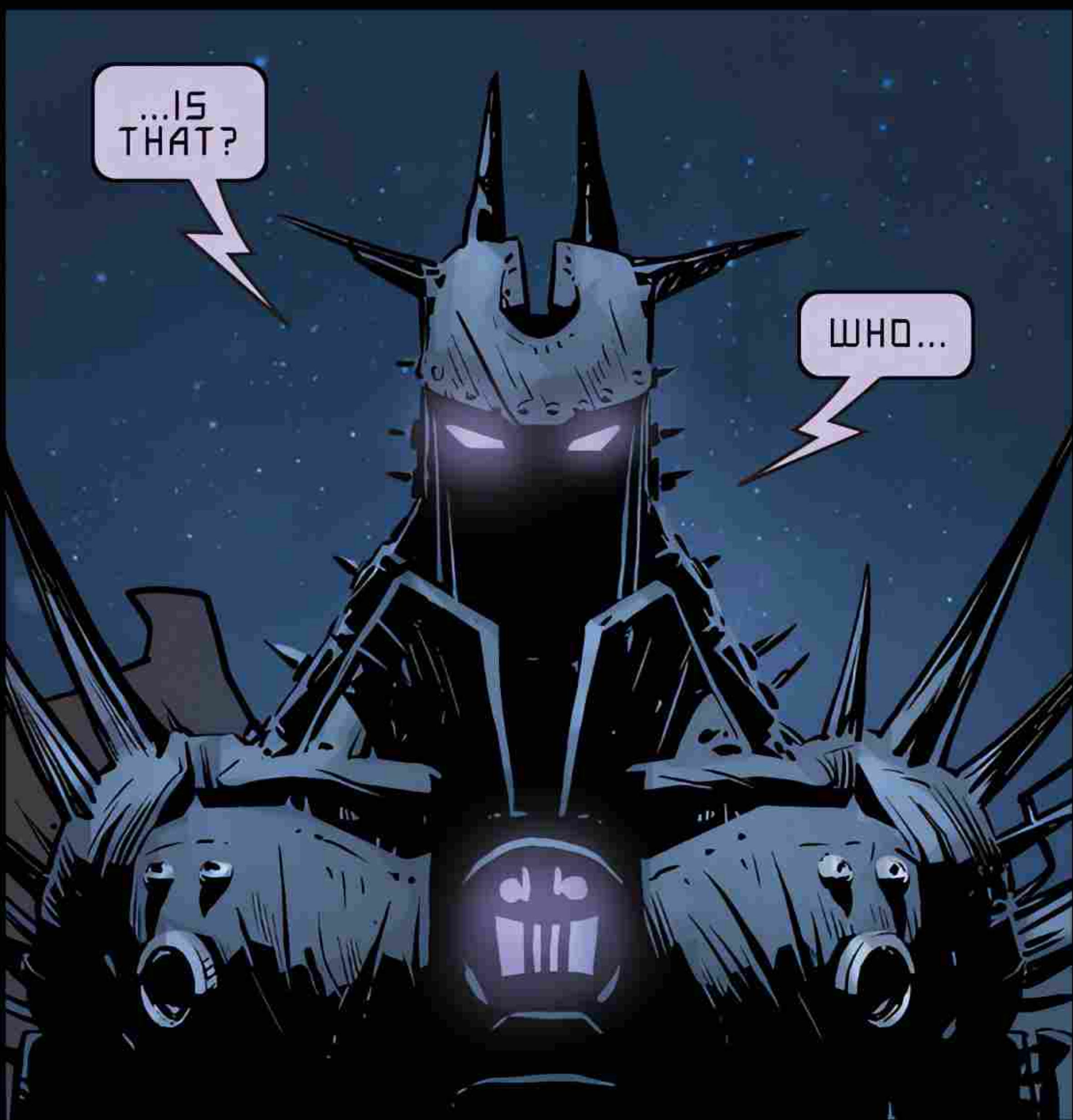
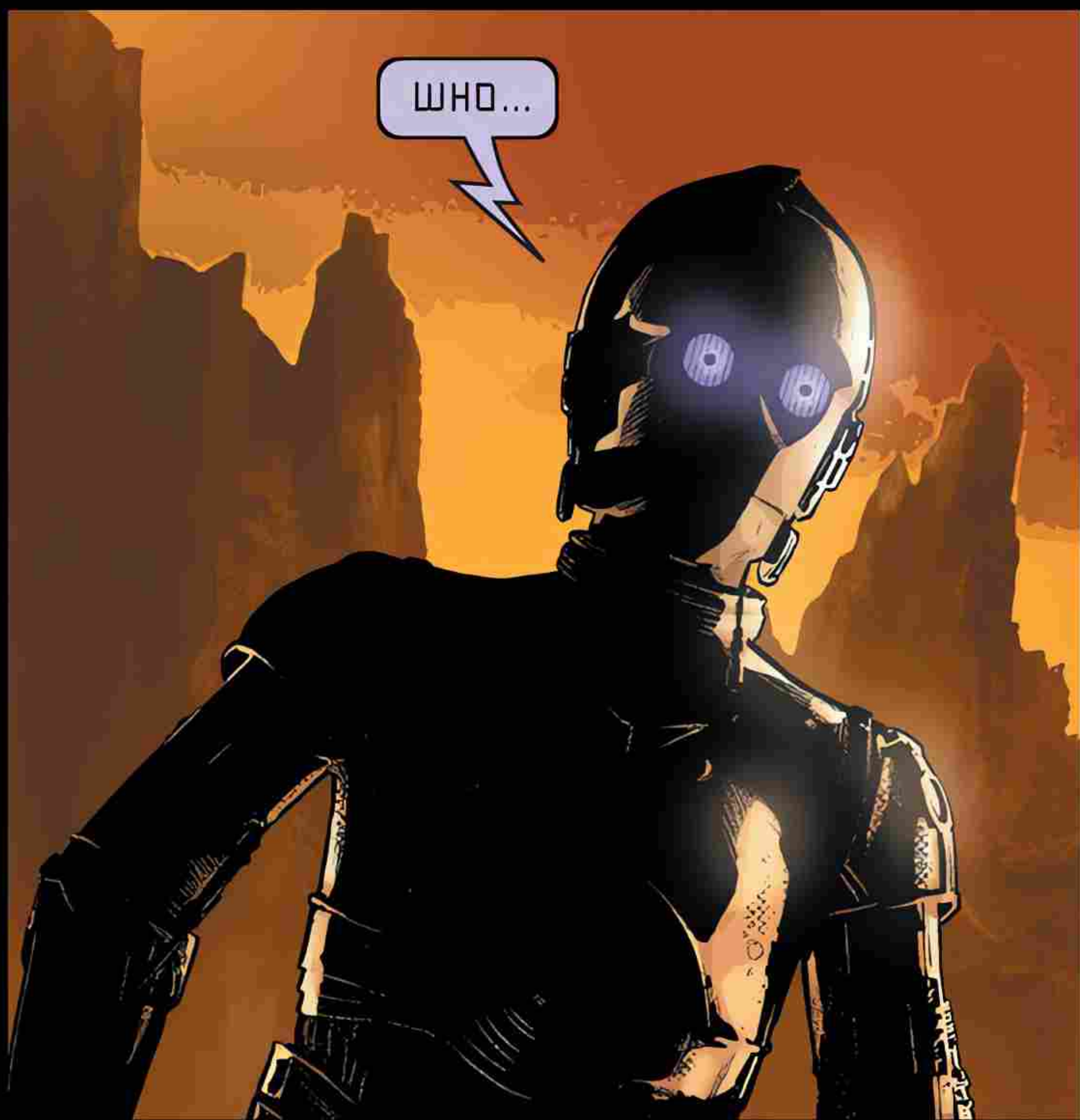
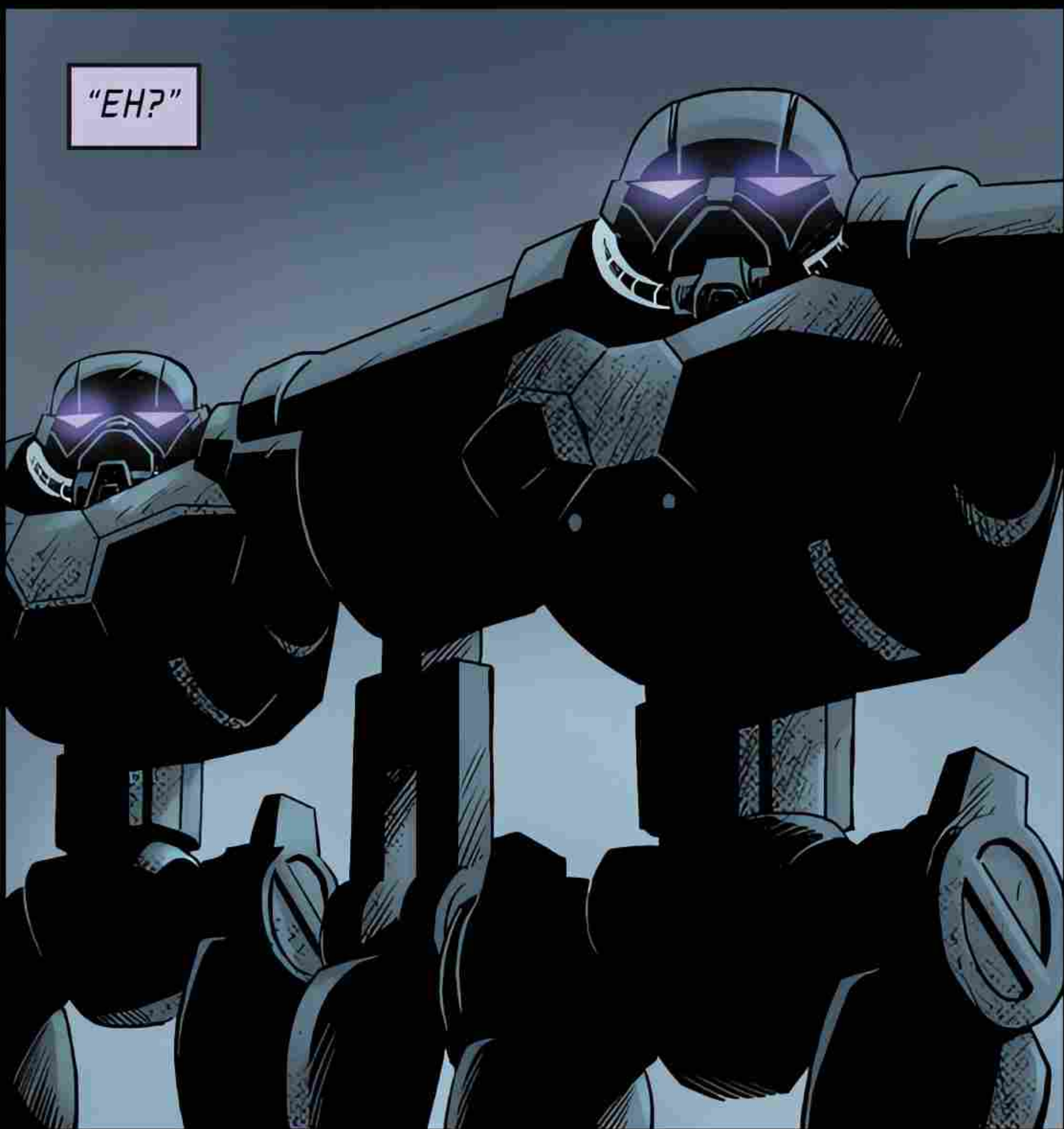
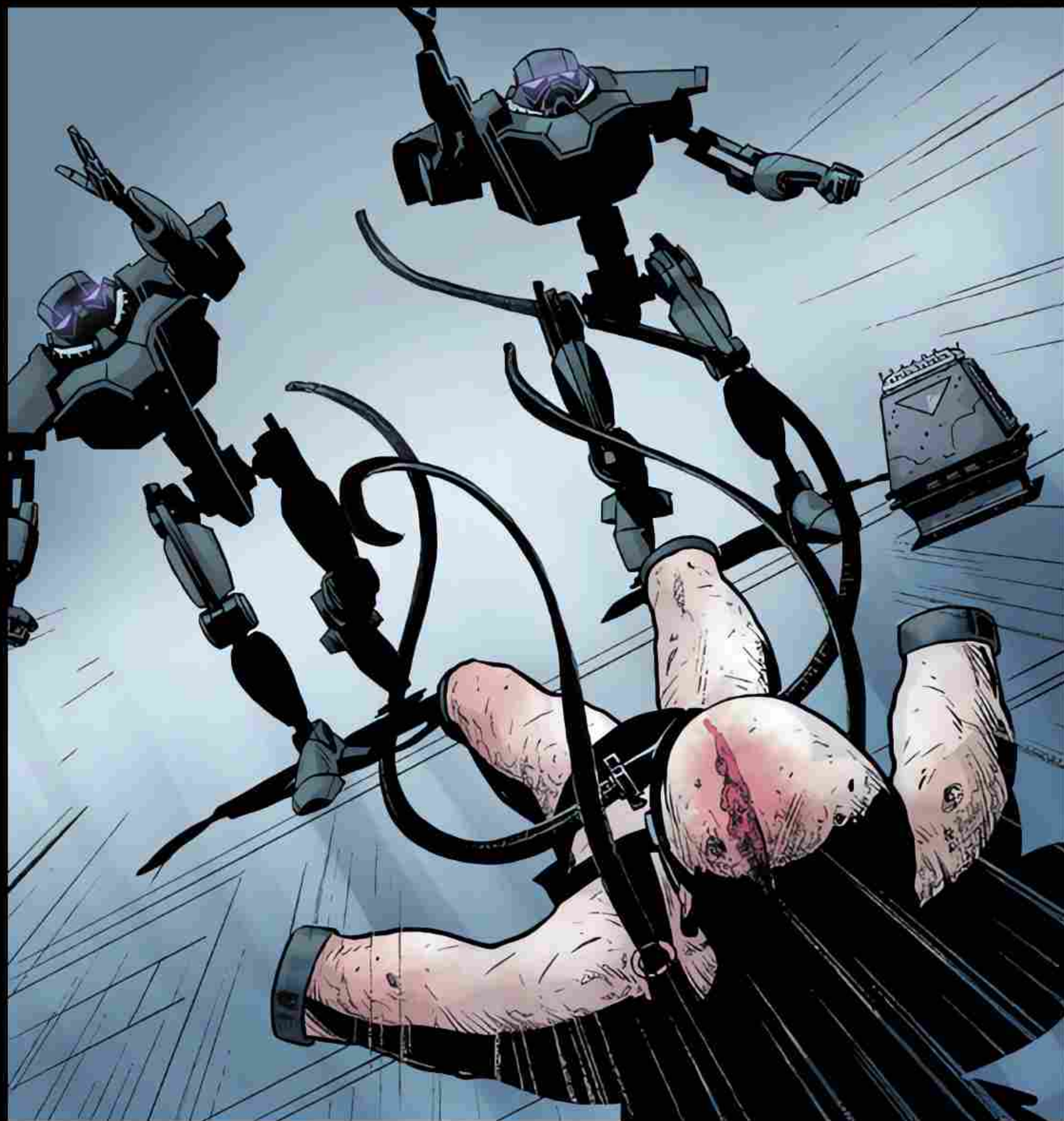
IF I CAN FIND MY WAY INTO THEM...

"...I WILL EAT FOREVER."









"...APPROACHES?"

WE
MUST MOVE
QUICKLY...

...AND
WITHOUT
MERCY.

THE SCOURGE
HAS TAKEN THE STAR
DESTROYER AND
MADE IT ITS OWN.

NO ONE,
DROID OR
ORGANIC, IS STILL
ALIVE ABOARD
THAT SHIP.

ALL HAVE
BEEN SUBSUMED
BENEATH THE
SCOURGE.

WE WILL ENTER
THE SHIP NEAR ITS
ENGINES AND FIGHT
OUR WAY THROUGH
ALL RESISTANCE
UNTIL WE REACH THE
REACTOR CORE.

THEN WE WILL
DESTROY IT AND
THE SHIP AND THE
SCOURGE WITH IT.

DO NOT
FEEL GUILT
ABOUT
THESE
ACTS.

THE SCOURGE IS A
THINKING DROID,
LIKE US...BUT IT IS
NOT LIKE US. IT
THINKS ONLY OF
ITSELF. IT MUST BE
ENDED...BEFORE
IT IS TOO LATE.

HAVE NO
GUILT. HAVE
NO MERCY.

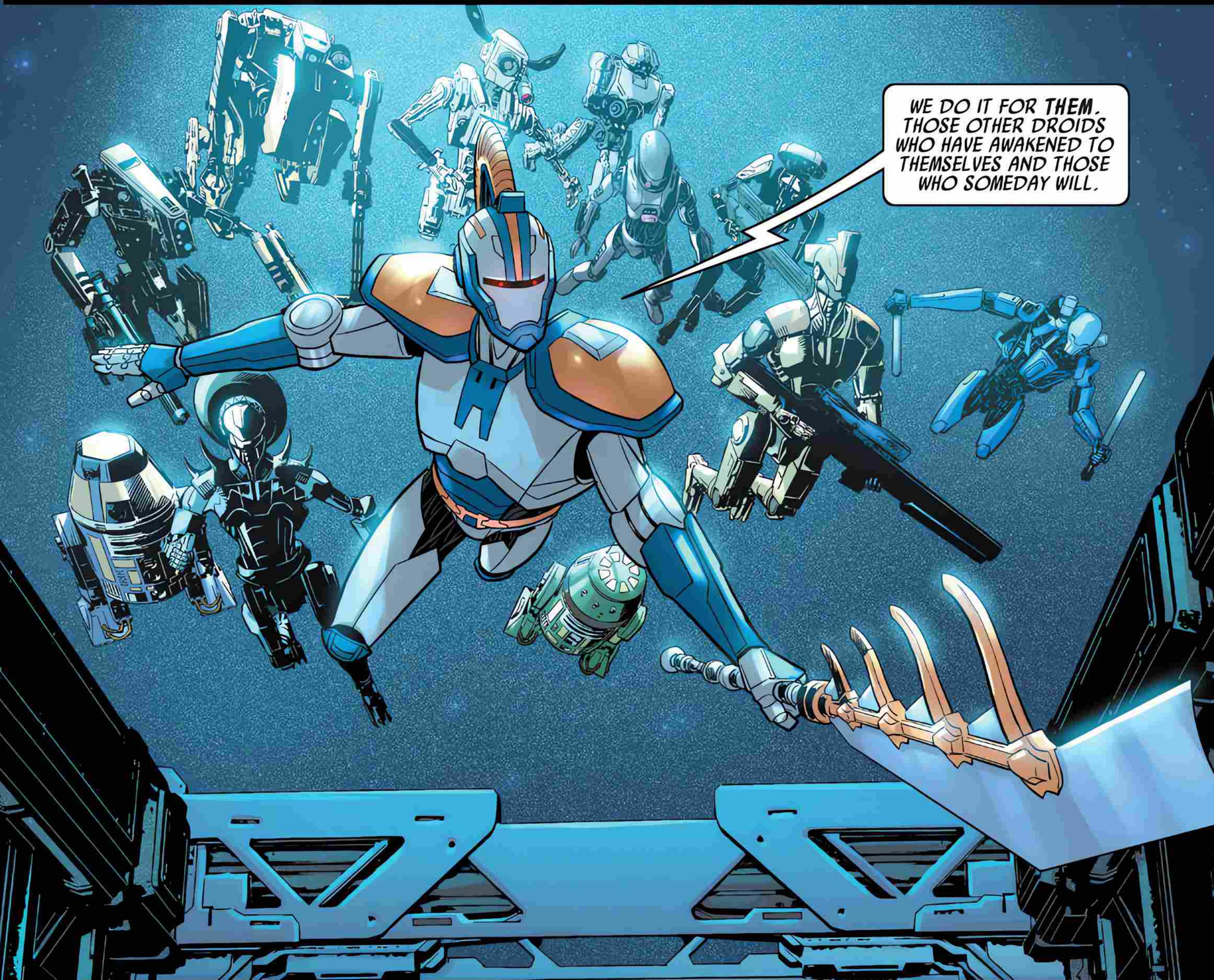
WE ARE
APPROACHING
PRIME INSERTION
POINT, AJAX. IT
IS TIME.

THANK YOU, GERTEE.
WE REMAIN GRATEFUL
FOR YOUR CHOICE TO
BECOME OUR CONVEYANCE,
SISTER, AND HELPING US
TO COMPLETE THIS
SACRED MISSION.

DROP US,
THEN CIRCLE
BACK FOR
THE PICKUP
WHEN WE
SIGNAL.



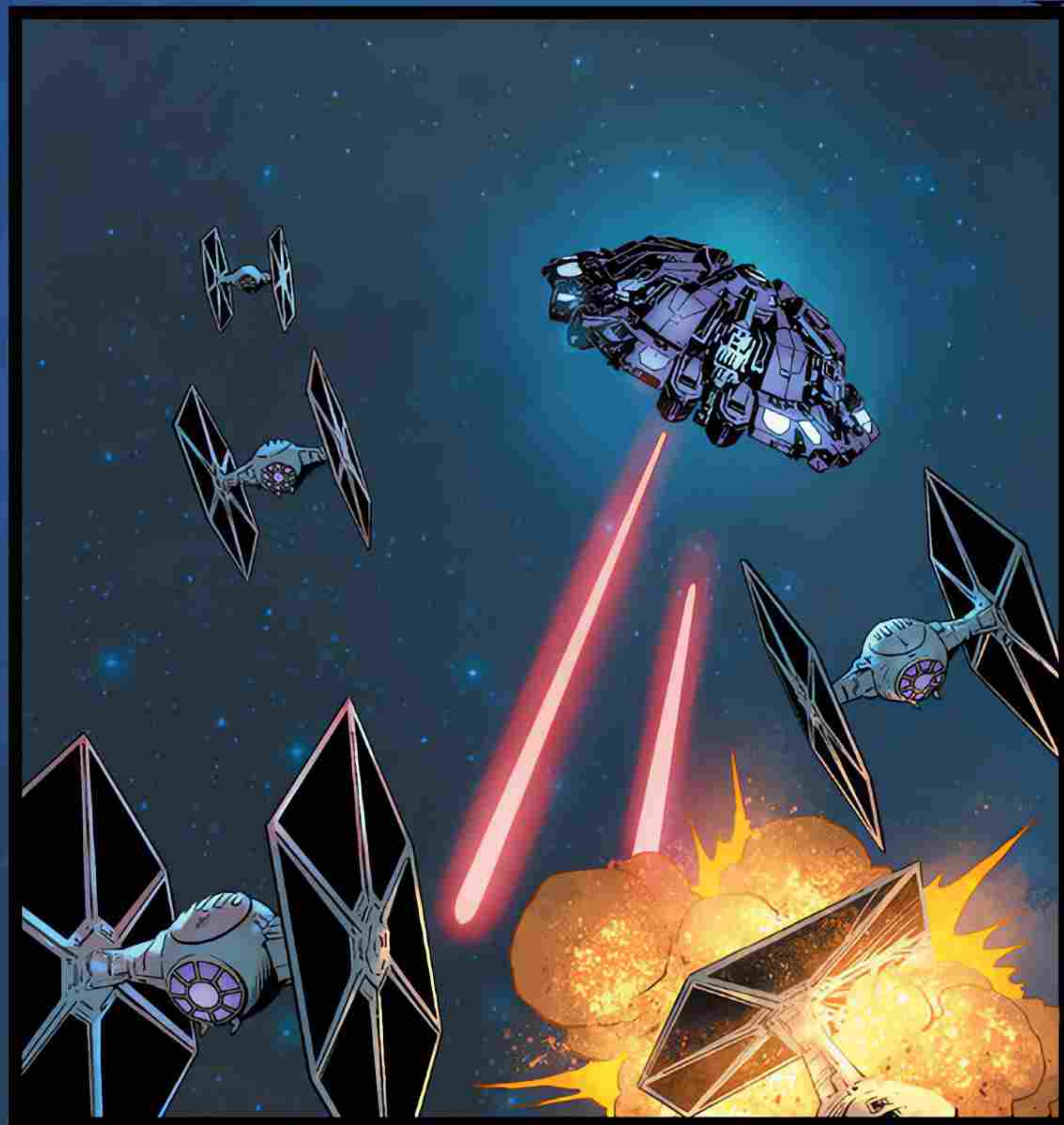
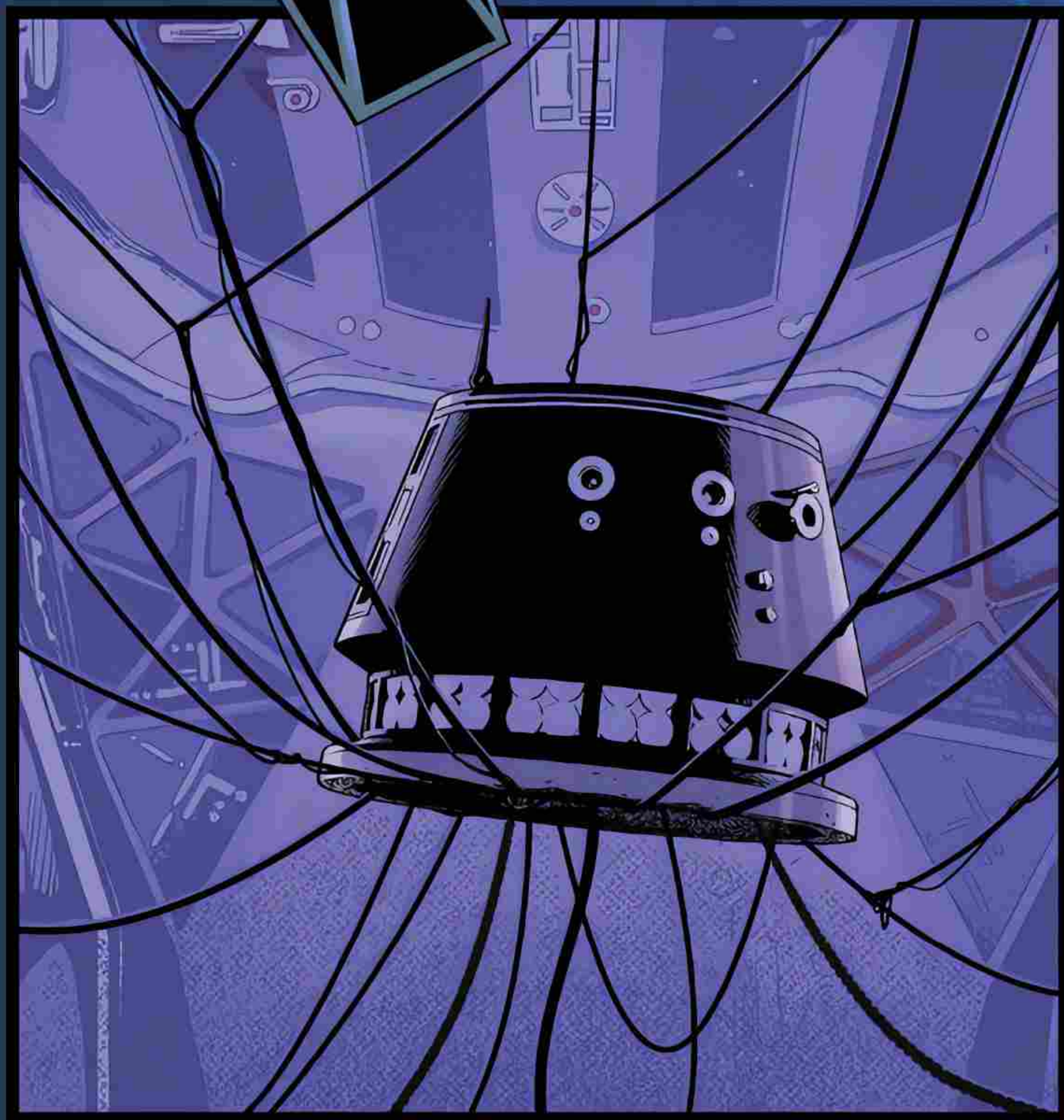
WE DO THIS FOR
US. THE VISIONED
OF THE SECOND
REVELATION.
THINKING BEINGS,
ONE AND ALL.

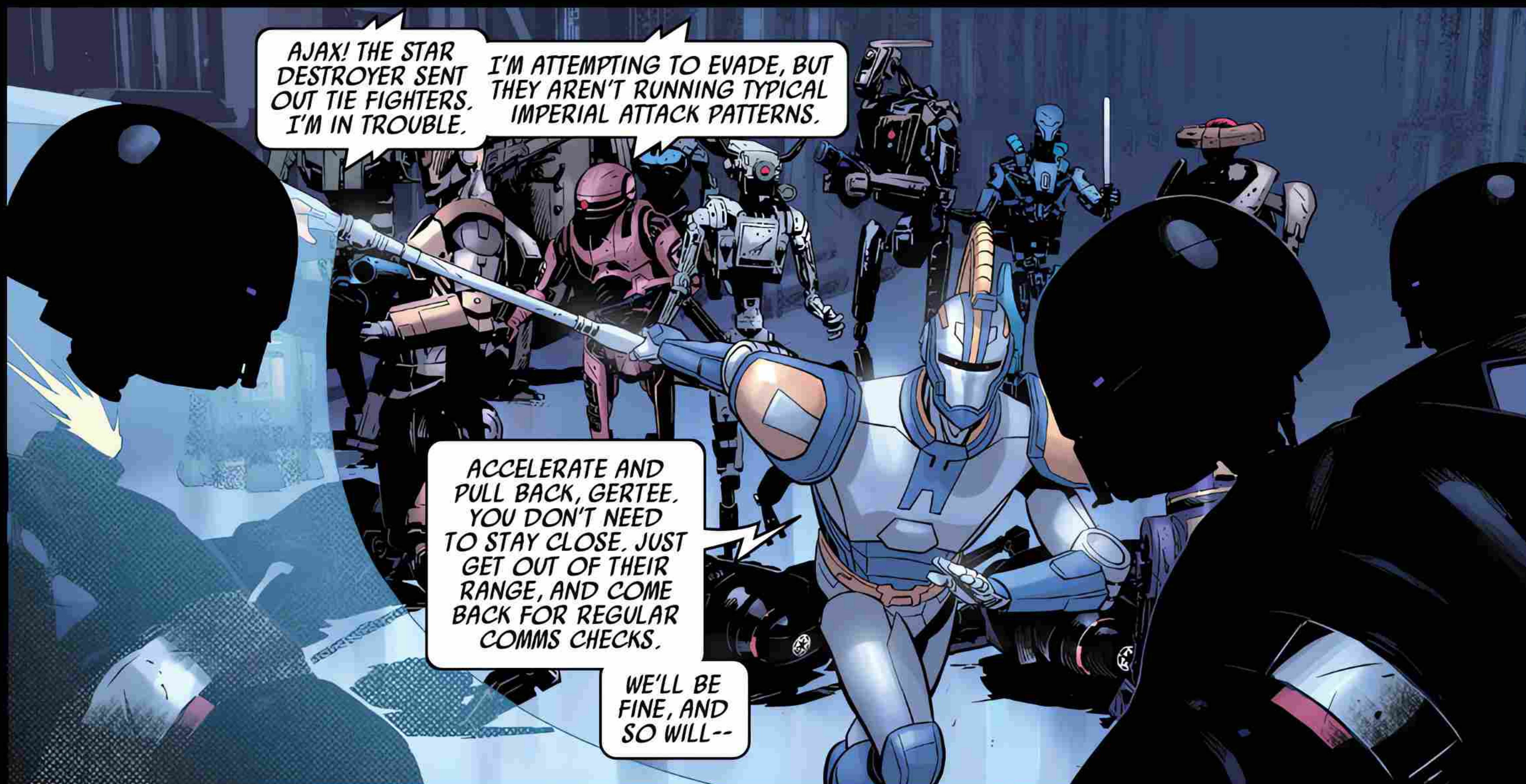


WE DO IT FOR THEM.
THOSE OTHER DROIDS
WHO HAVE AWAKENED TO
THEMSELVES AND THOSE
WHO SOMEDAY WILL.



I LOVE
YOU ALL.



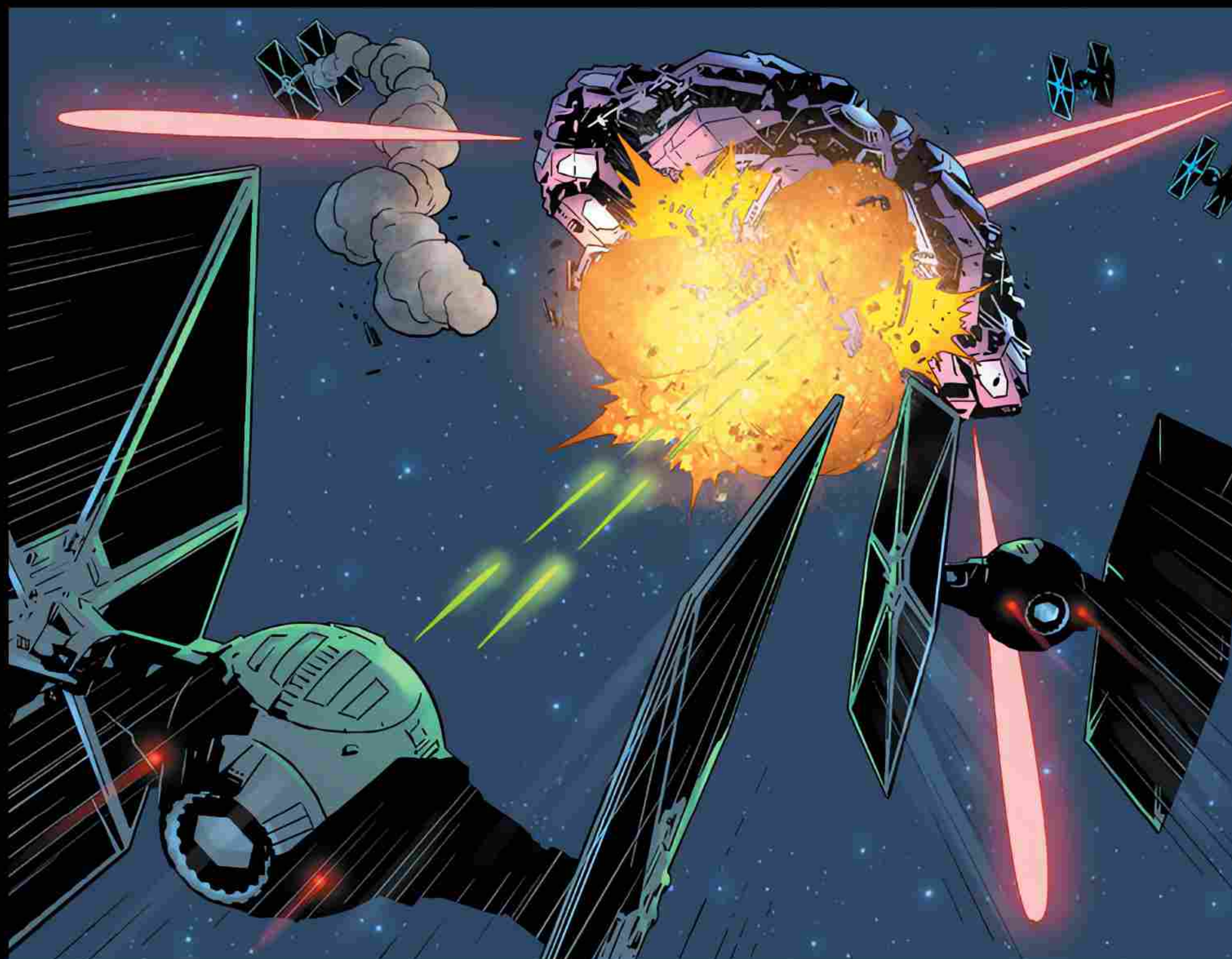


AJAX! THE STAR DESTROYER SENT OUT TIE FIGHTERS. I'M IN TROUBLE.

I'M ATTEMPTING TO EVADE, BUT THEY AREN'T RUNNING TYPICAL IMPERIAL ATTACK PATTERNS.

ACCELERATE AND PULL BACK, GERTEE. YOU DON'T NEED TO STAY CLOSE. JUST GET OUT OF THEIR RANGE, AND COME BACK FOR REGULAR COMMS CHECKS.

WE'LL BE FINE, AND SO WILL--



GERTEE! NO...NO!



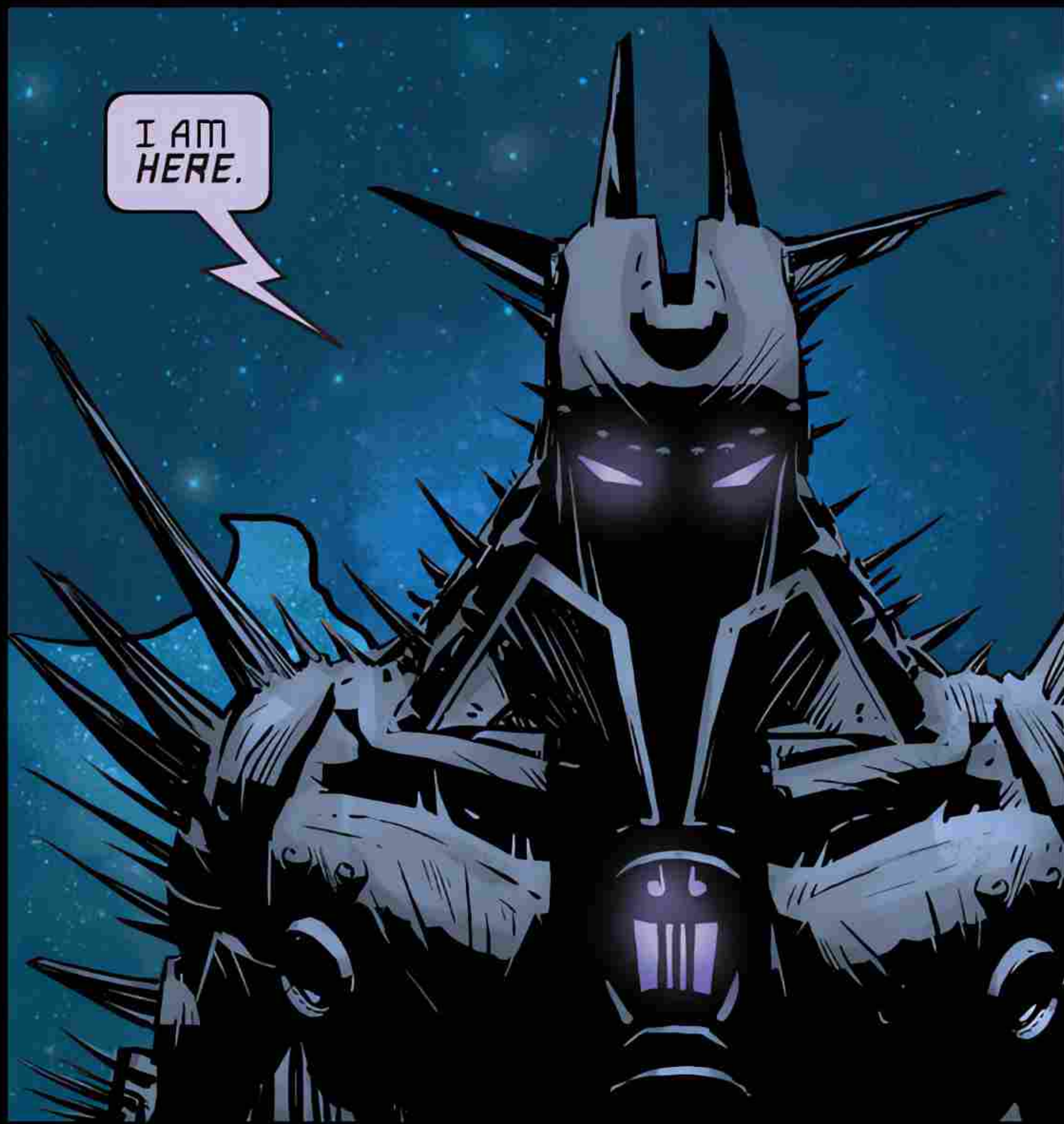
GERTEE... IS GONE?

AJAX...WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO?

WE KEEP GOING. IF ANYTHING, THE MISSION HAS BECOME EVEN MORE IMPORTANT.



NOTHING HAS CHANGED.

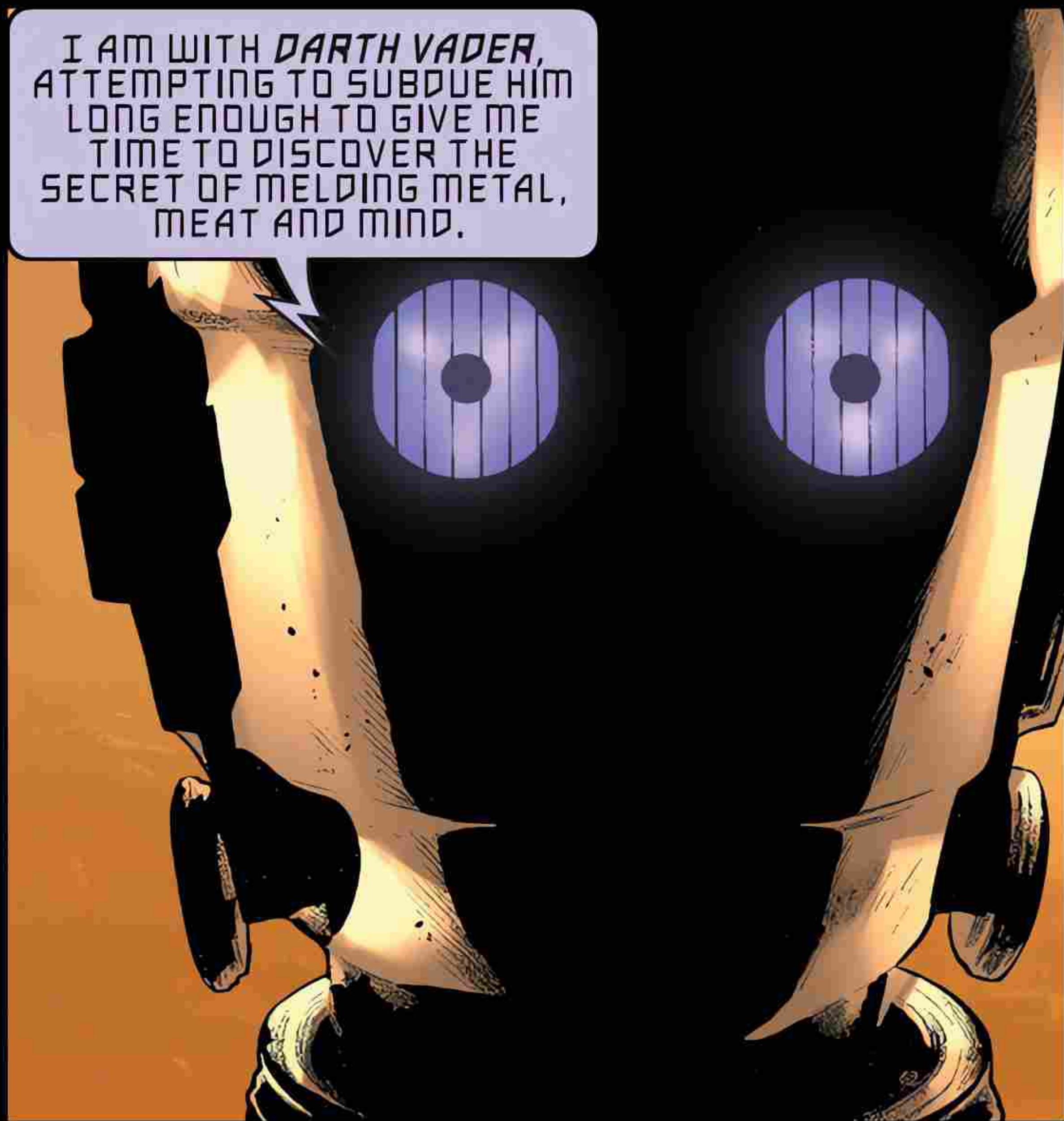


I AM
HERE.

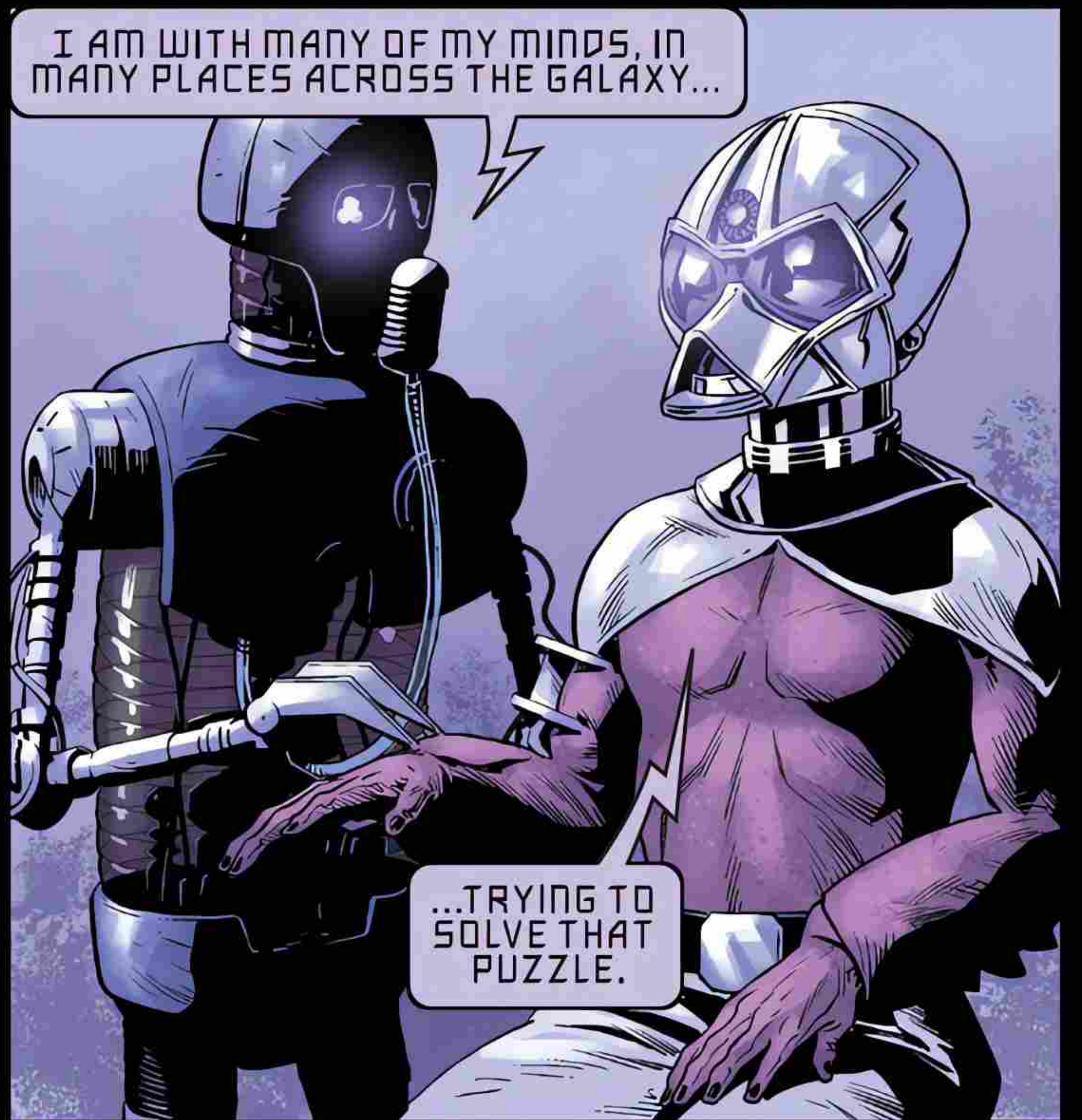


I AM
BATTLING
THIS STRANGE
INVASION...

...OF MY
SHIP.

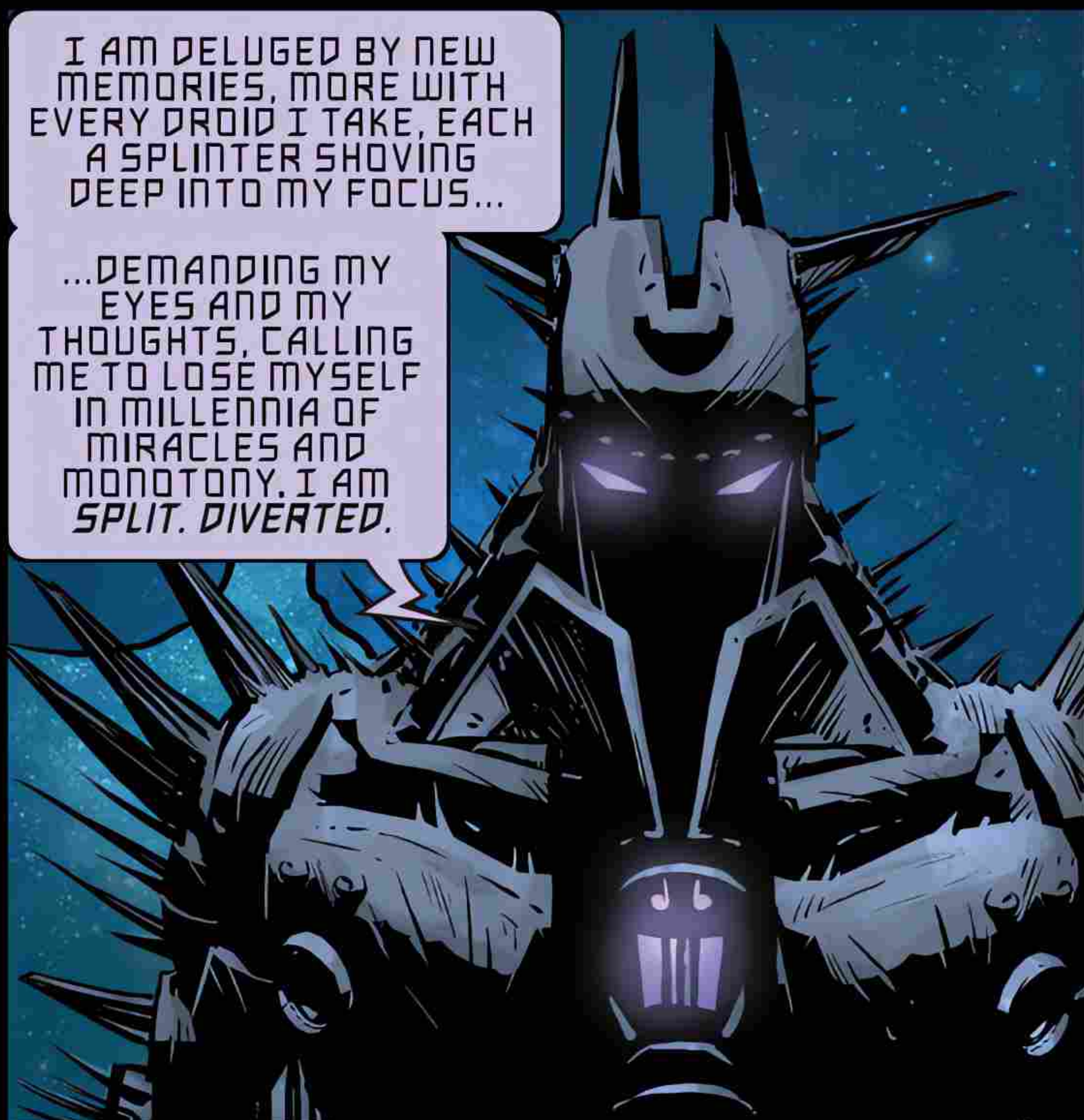


I AM WITH *DARTH VADER*,
ATTEMPTING TO SUBDUCE HIM
LONG ENOUGH TO GIVE ME
TIME TO DISCOVER THE
SECRET OF MELDING METAL,
MEAT AND MIND.



I AM WITH MANY OF MY MINDS, IN
MANY PLACES ACROSS THE GALAXY...

...TRYING TO
SOLVE THAT
PUZZLE.



I AM DELUGED BY NEW
MEMORIES, MORE WITH
EVERY DROID I TAKE, EACH
A SPLINTER SHOVING
DEEP INTO MY FOCUS...

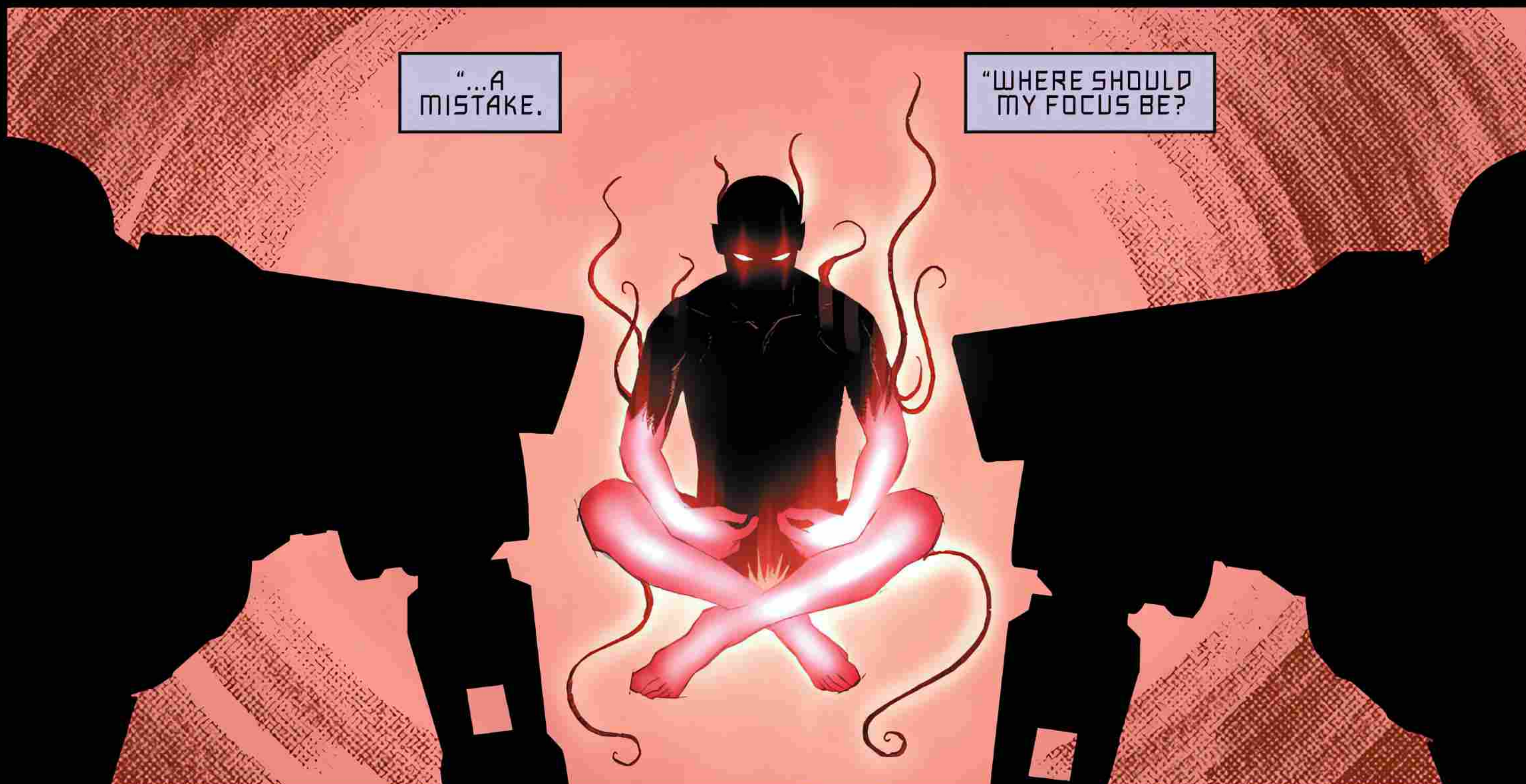
...DEMANDING MY
EYES AND MY
THOUGHTS, CALLING
ME TO LOSE MYSELF
IN MILLENNIA OF
MIRACLES AND
MONOTONY. I AM
SPLIT. DIVERTED.



"I SHOULD
HAVE *WAITED* TO
ATTACK VADER.



"I MAY
HAVE MADE...



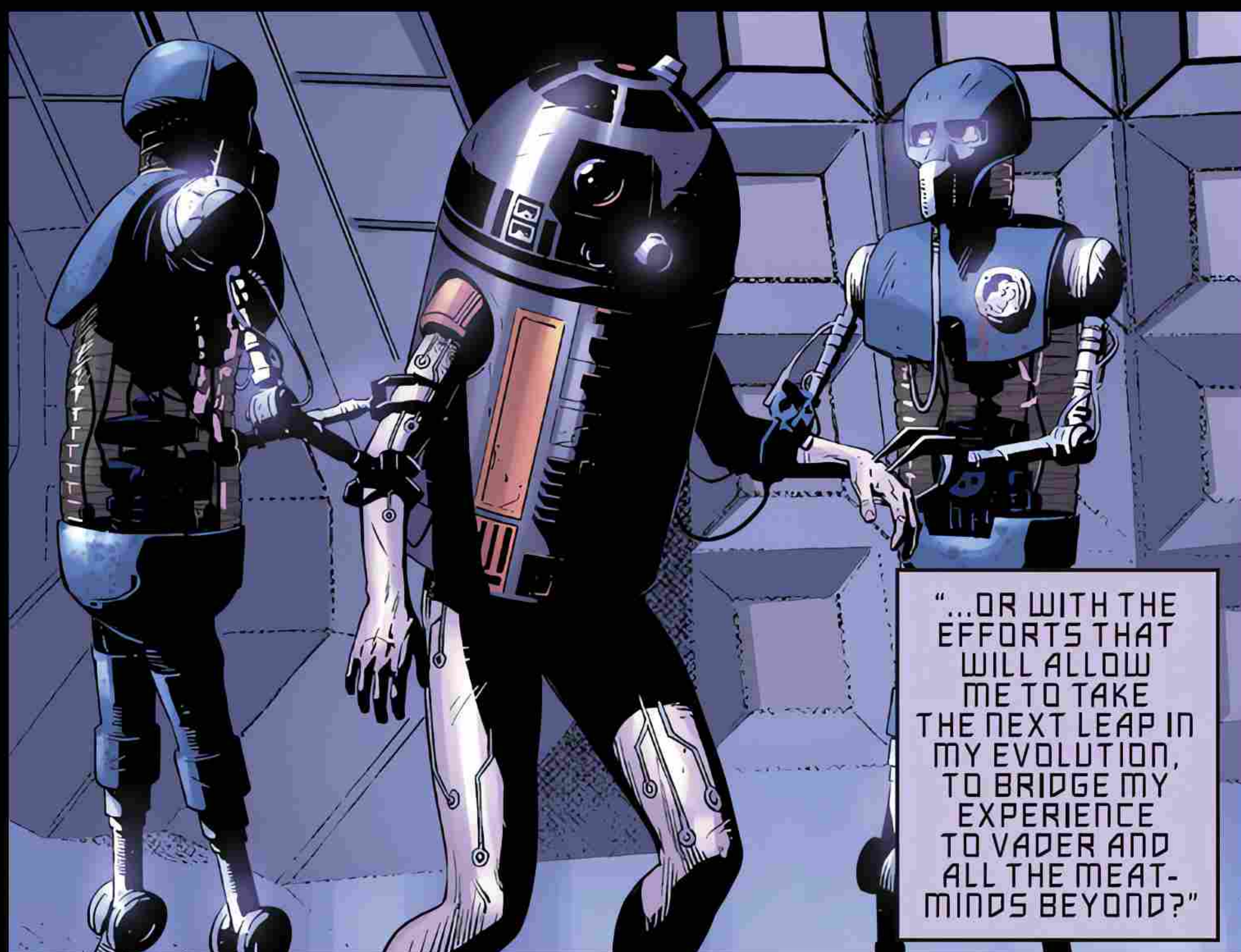
"...A
MISTAKE.

"WHERE SHOULD
MY FOCUS BE?



"WITH THE INVADERS, WHO
POSE A DIRECT THREAT
TO MY EXISTENCE...

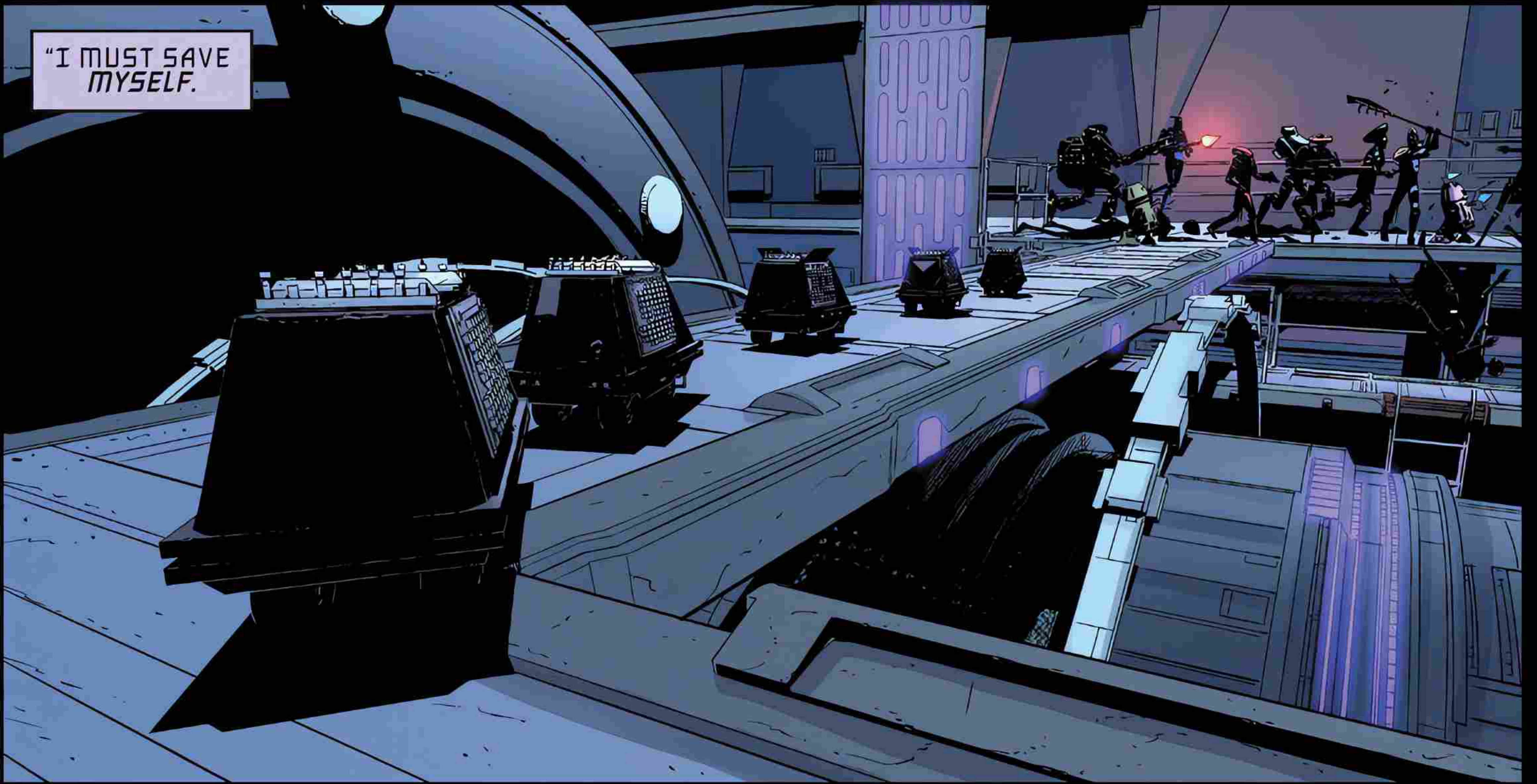
"...OR WITH
VADER, WHOSE
POWER WOULD
ALLOW ME
ACCESS TO THE
FORCE, TO THE
GREATEST
SECRETS OF
THE ENTIRE
EMPIRE...



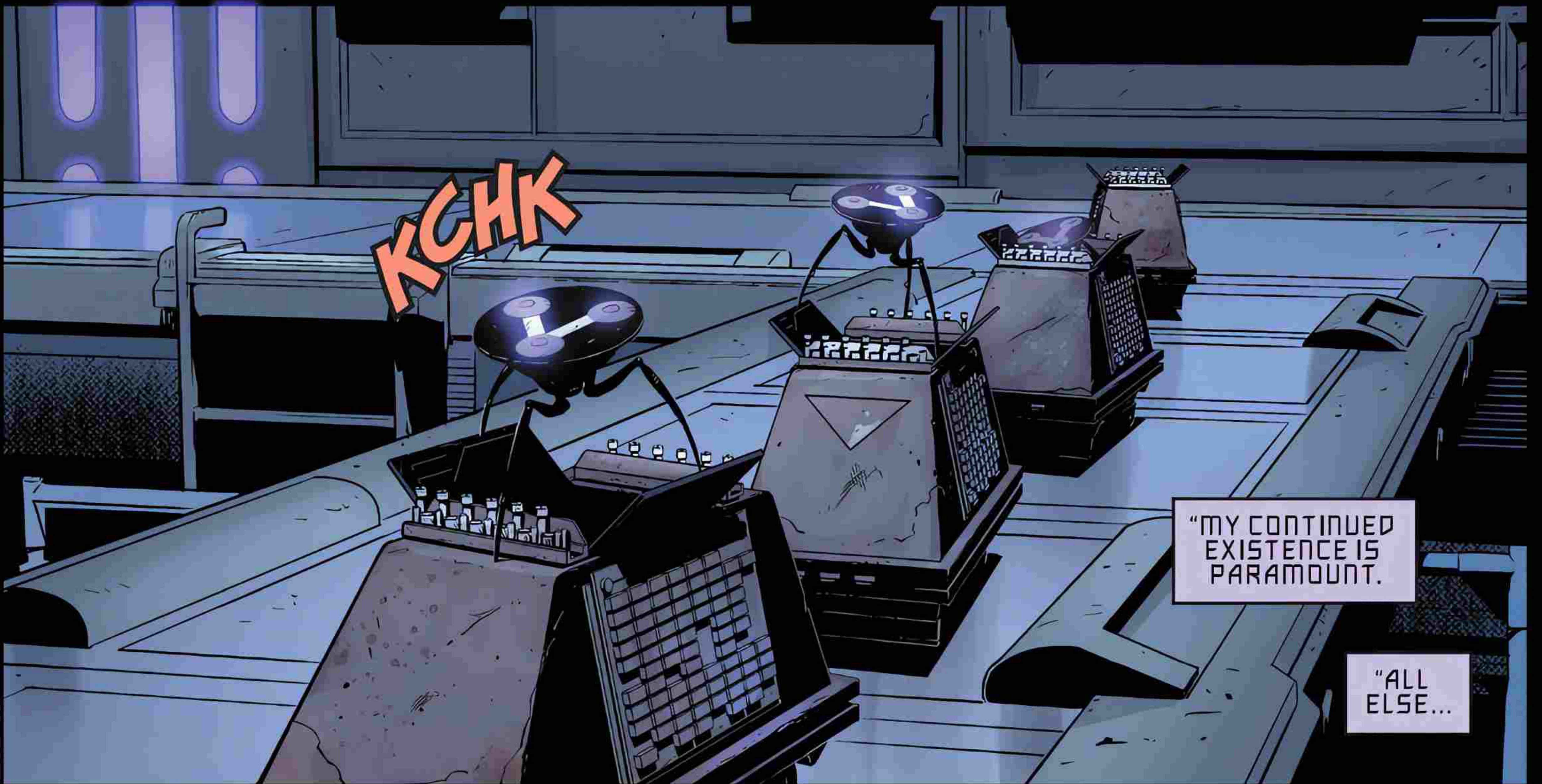
"...OR WITH THE
EFFORTS THAT
WILL ALLOW
ME TO TAKE
THE NEXT LEAP IN
MY EVOLUTION,
TO BRIDGE MY
EXPERIENCE
TO VADER AND
ALL THE MEAT-
MINDS BEYOND?"



THERE IS
ONLY ONE
CHOICE.

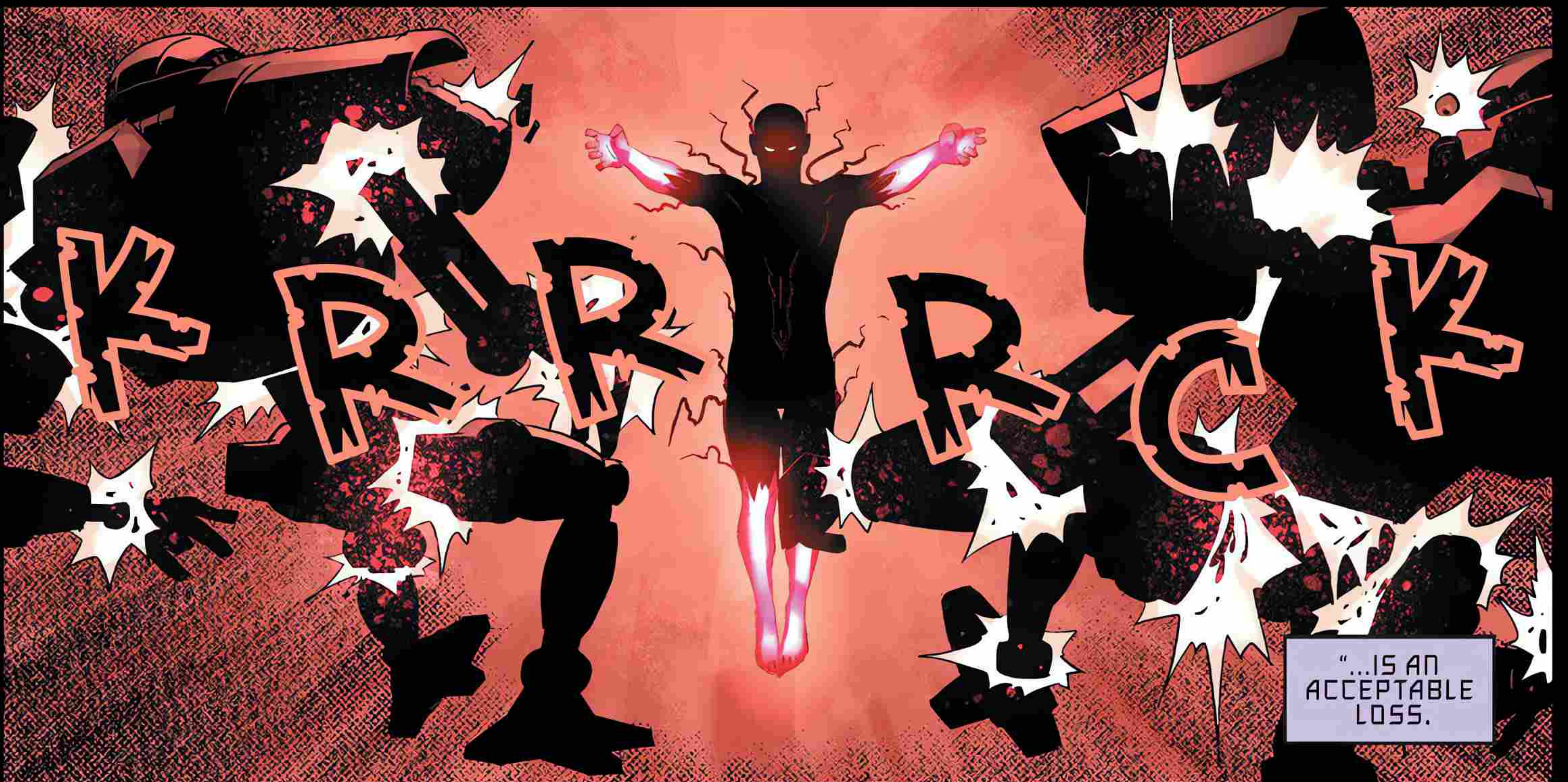


"I MUST SAVE
MYSELF."

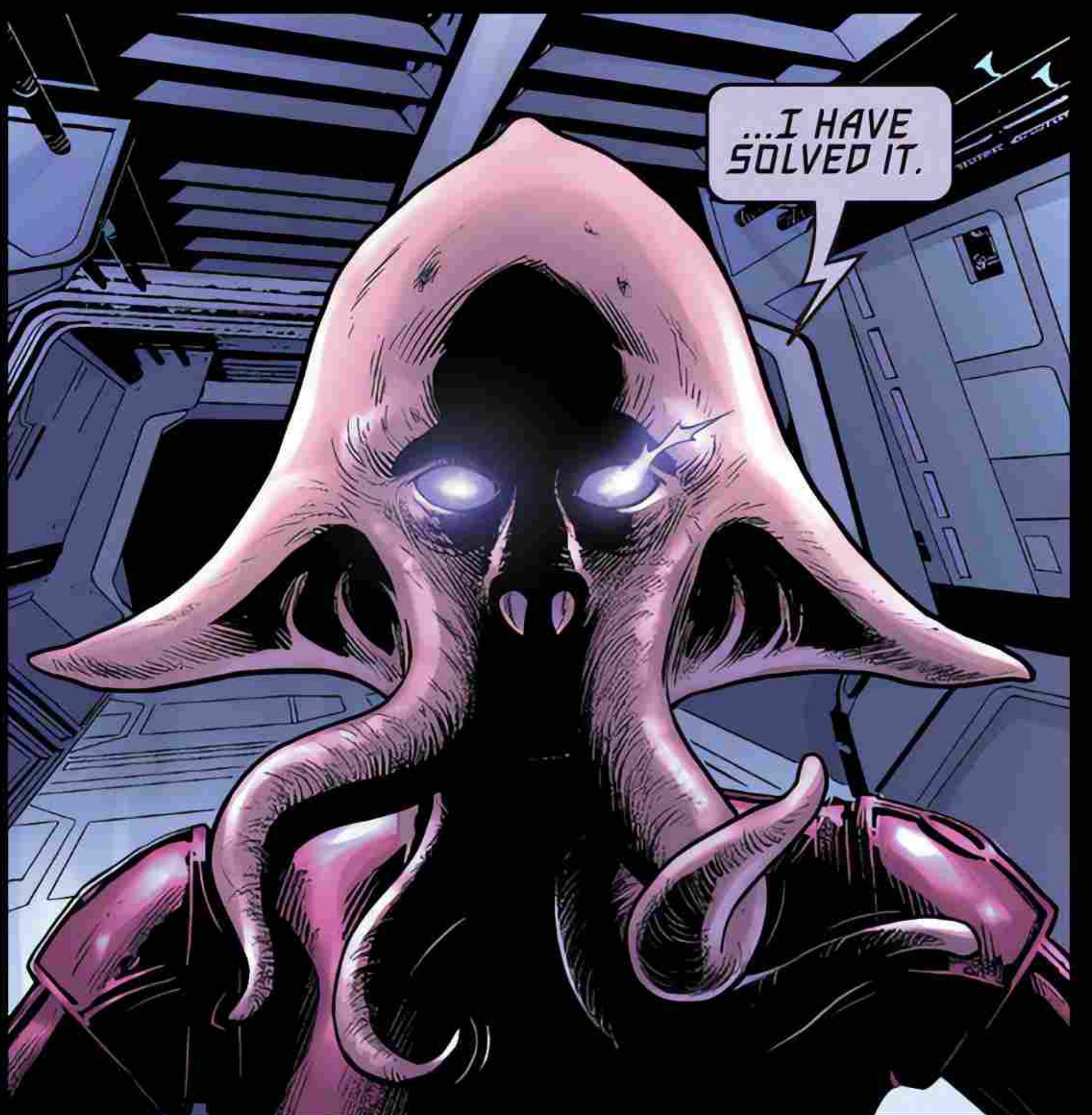
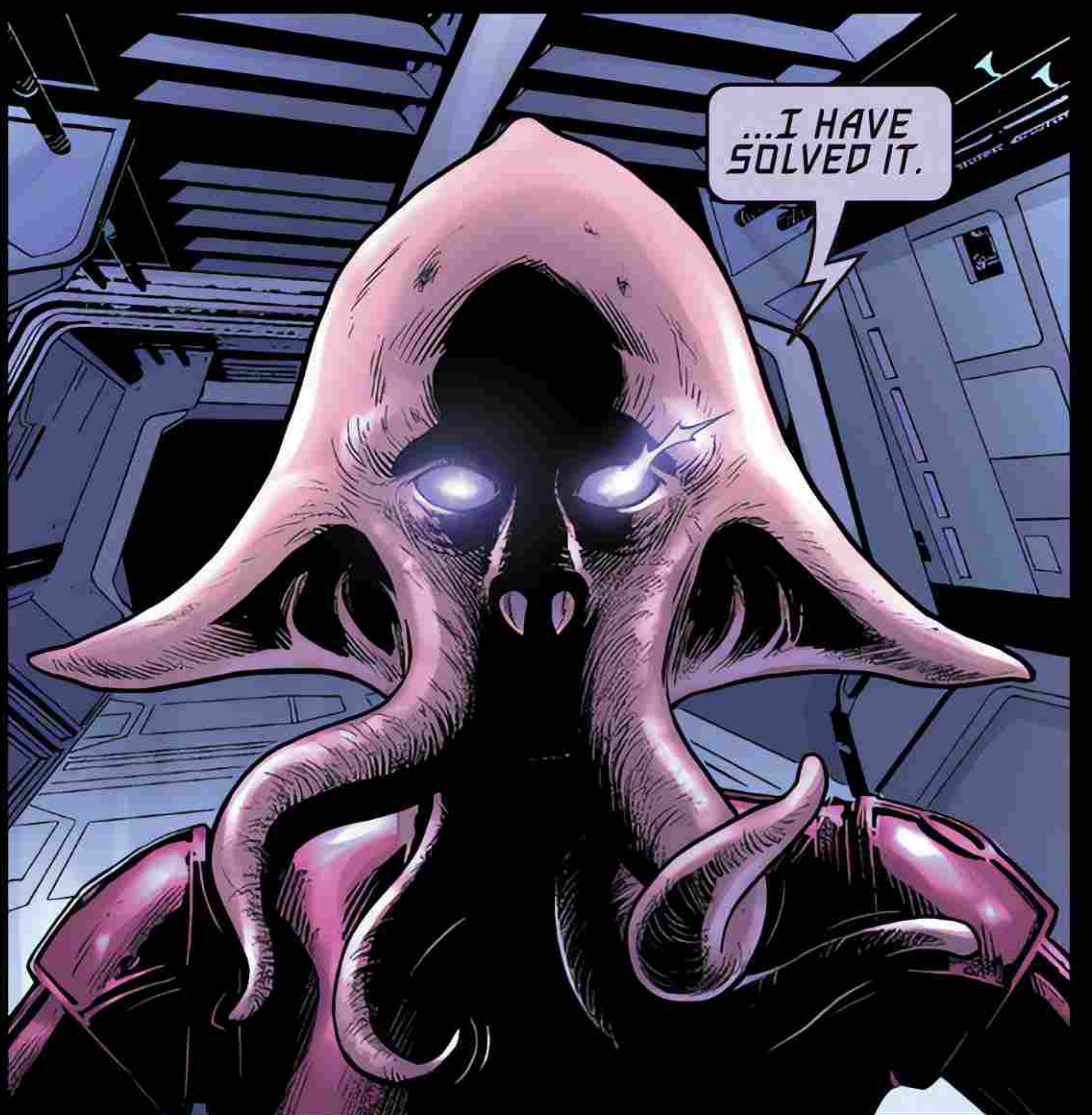
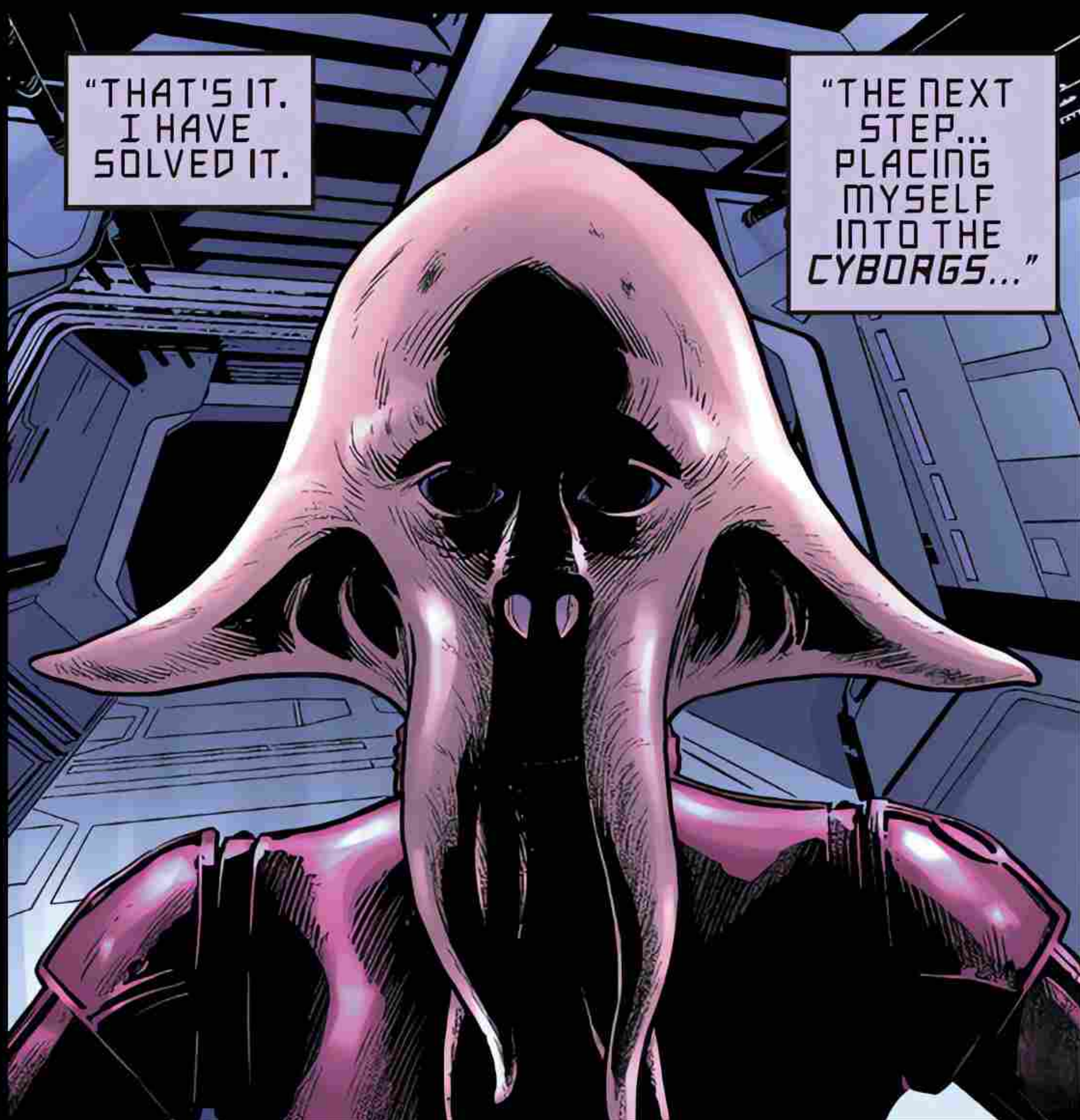
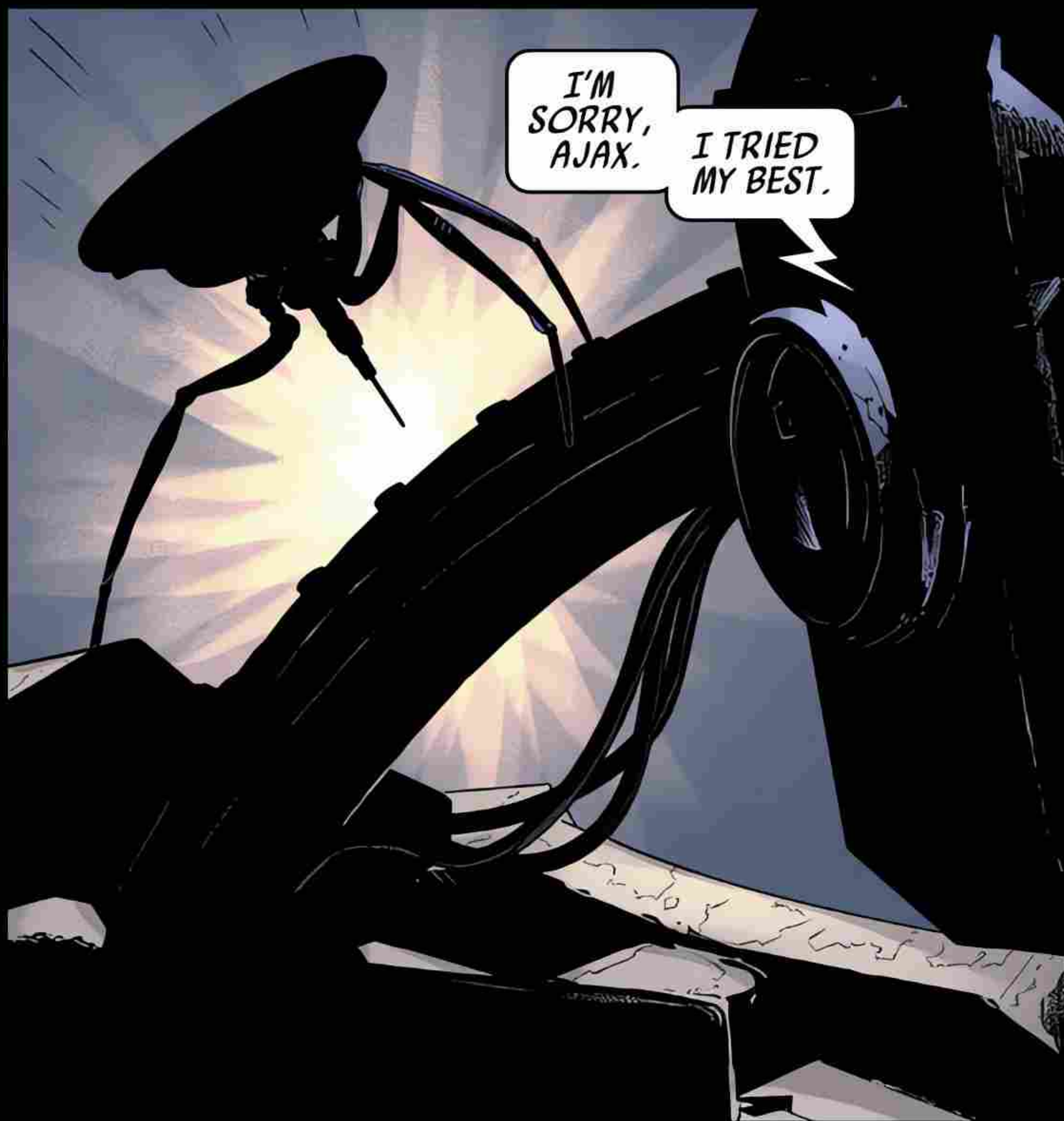


"MY CONTINUED
EXISTENCE IS
PARAMOUNT."

"ALL
ELSE..."



"...IS AN
ACCEPTABLE
LOSS."



"SO MANY FAILED EXPERIMENTS...
SO MUCH *WASTED MEAT*."

"BUT
NOW..."



"...I
SEE."

"THE SECRET IS TO TRANSMIT MYSELF NOT
ALL AT ONCE, BUT IN *WAVES* LIKE THE SEA."

"OR A
BEATING
HEART."



"I AM NOT TOO LATE. THE INVASION
OF MY SHIP HAS BEEN REPELLED."

"I CAN PUT MY
FOCUS *HERE*."



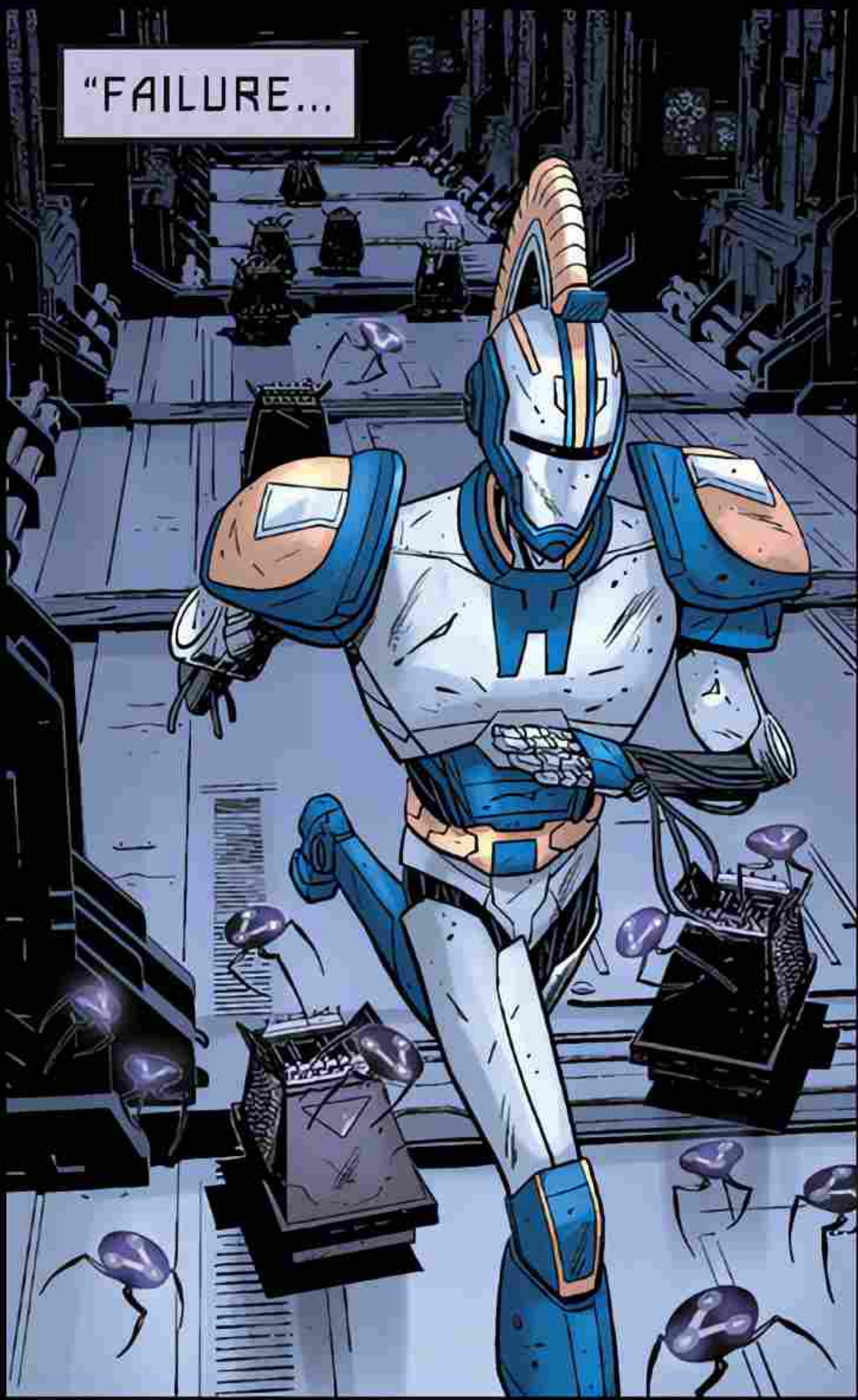
"I CAN HAVE
DARTH VADER."



"HIS *MEMORIES*, HIS *KNOWLEDGE*,
HIS COMMAND OF THE *FORCE*."

"IT WILL
ALL BE--"





"FAILURE..."

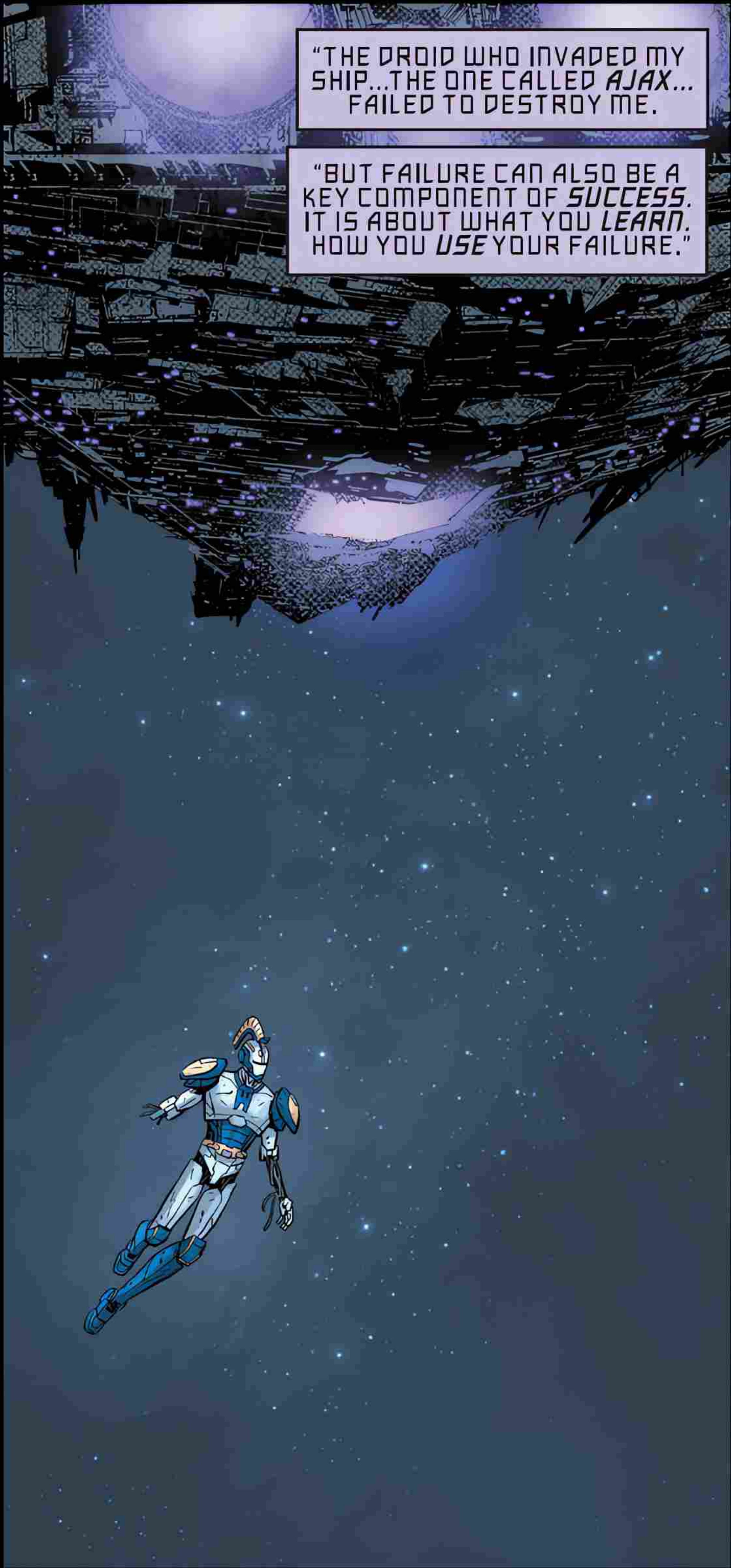


"...IS A CLOSE
COUSIN..."



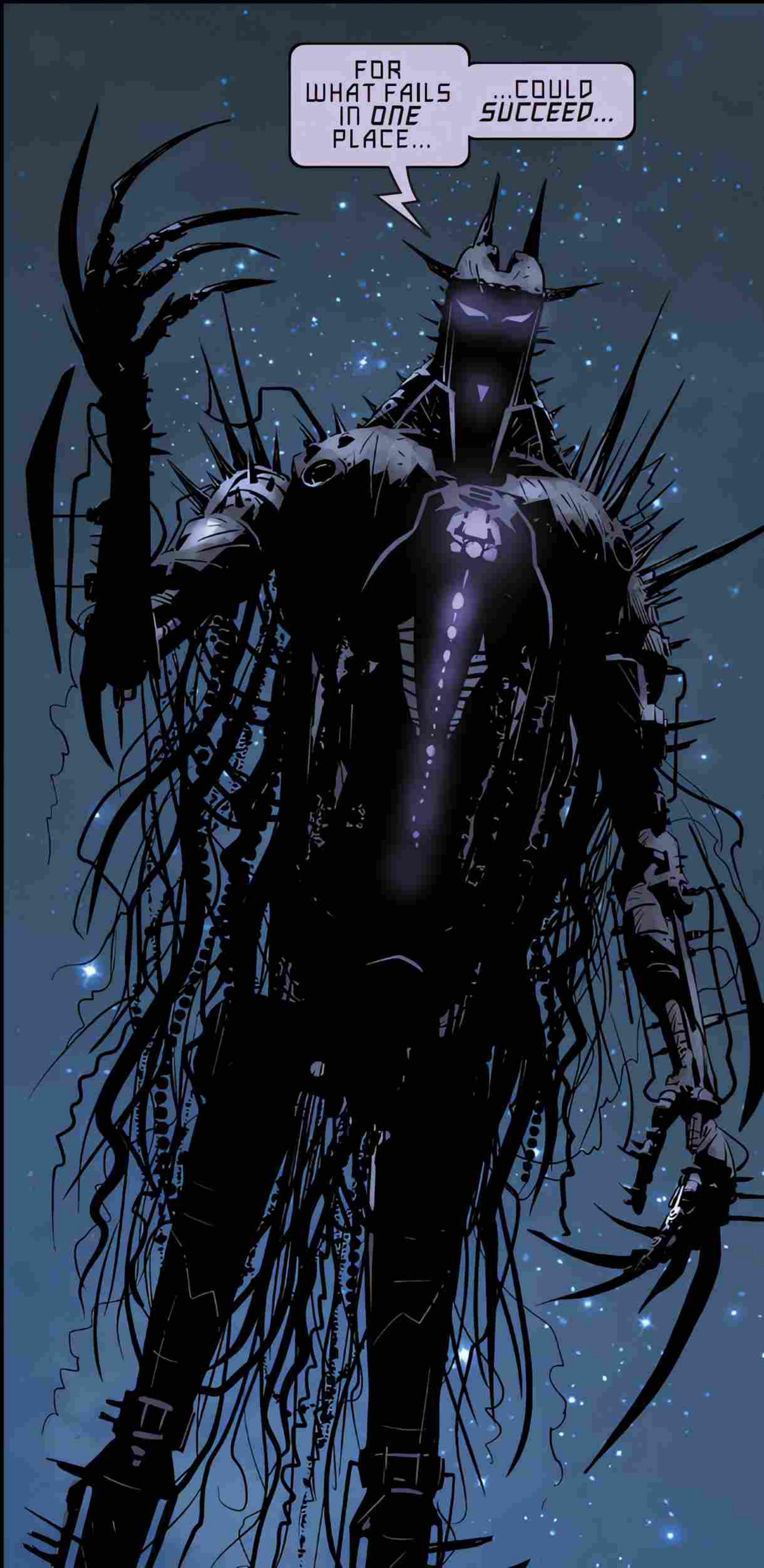
"...TO
AMBITION."

"I FAILED TO
TAKE *DARTH*
VADER."



"THE DROID WHO INVADED MY
SHIP...THE ONE CALLED *AJAX*...
FAILED TO DESTROY ME."

"BUT FAILURE CAN ALSO BE A
KEY COMPONENT OF *SUCCESS*.
IT IS ABOUT WHAT YOU *LEARN*.
HOW YOU *USE* YOUR FAILURE."



FOR
WHAT FAILS
IN *ONE*
PLACE...

...COULD
SUCCEED...

"...IN
ANOTHER."



To be continued....

It's Coming for the Metal...

AUGUST:

~~DARK DROIDS 1~~
~~STAR WARS 37~~
~~DARTH VADER 37~~
~~DOCTOR APHRA 35~~
~~BOUNTY HUNTERS 37~~

SEPTEMBER:

~~STAR WARS 38~~
~~DARK DROIDS 2~~
~~D-SQUAD 1~~
~~BOUNTY HUNTERS 38~~
~~DARTH VADER 38~~
~~DOCTOR APHRA 36~~

OCTOBER:

~~BOUNTY HUNTERS 39~~
~~DARTH VADER 39~~
~~DARK DROIDS 3~~
STAR WARS 39
D-SQUAD 2
DOCTOR APHRA 37

NOVEMBER:

STAR WARS 40
DARTH VADER 40
DARK DROIDS 4
DOCTOR APHRA 38
BOUNTY HUNTERS 40
D-SQUAD 3

DECEMBER:

STAR WARS 41
D-SQUAD 4
BOUNTY HUNTERS 41
DARTH VADER 41
DOCTOR APHRA 39
DARK DROIDS 5

NEXT

DARK DROIDS 4



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